BOXING'S U.K. RESURGENCE! ALL-COLOR!

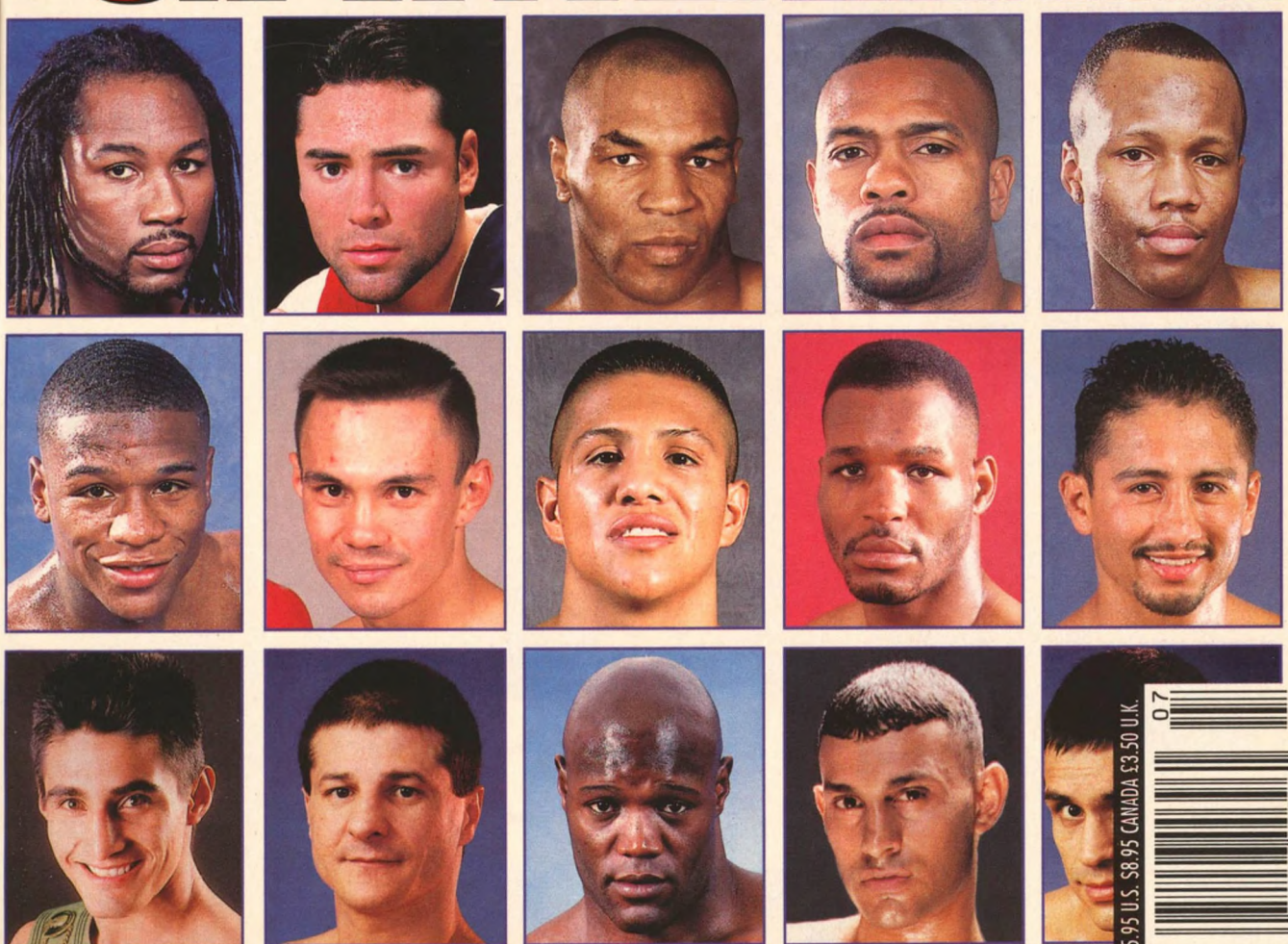
"The Bible Of Boxing" ®

July 2001

The RING ® EXTRA

the STATE of the GAME

Our Exclusive Annual Report



$5.95 U.S. $8.95 CANADA £3.50 U.K.

07

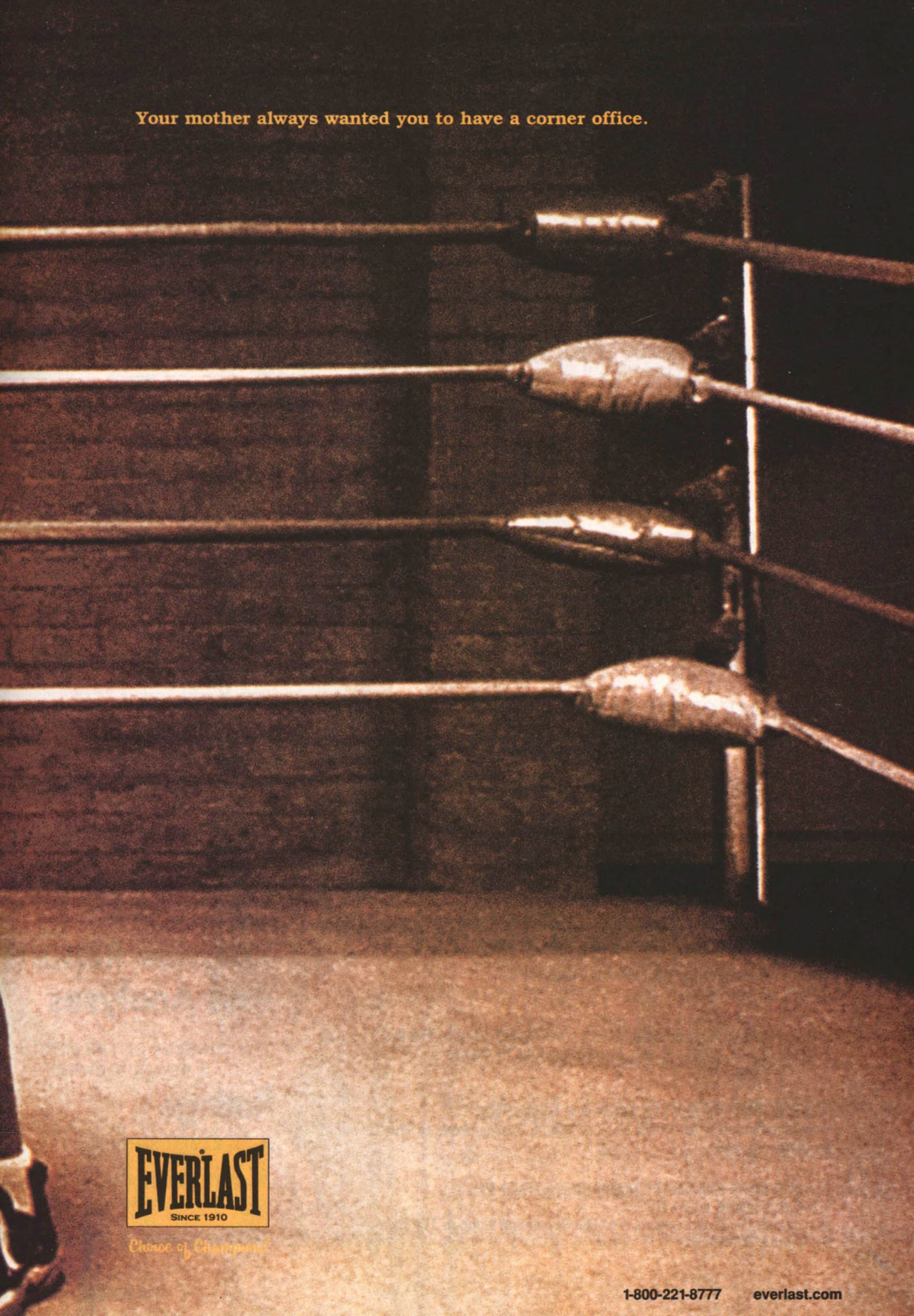
0 72246 00396 1

Display Until June 25

The HEART & SOUL *of* BOXING

HBO®

www.hbo.com/boxing ©1999 Home Box Office, a Division of Time Warner Entertainment Company, L.P. All rights reserved. ® Service mark of Time Warner Entertainment Company, L.P.


Your mother always wanted you to have a corner office.
EVERLAST
SINCE 1910
Choice of Champions
1-800-221-8777
everlast.com

The RING EXTRA

CONTENTS

July 2001

FEATURES

28 **ZAB JUDAH'S MOMENT OF TRUTH**
Can He Tame The Animal In Tszyu?
By Johnnie Whitehead

34 **THE STATE OF THE GAME**
Our Exclusive Annual Report
By Eric Raskin

50 **A BULL MARKET FOR BRITISH BOXING**
With The BBC On Board, The Sky *Isn't* The Limit!
By Brian Doogan

56 **JOHN RUIZ WINS HIS FIVE-YEAR MARATHON**
"Yesterday's Nobody Became Today's Somebody"
By Ted Bodenrader

62 **ANDREW LEWIS IS A LEGITIMATE THREAT TO SHANE MOSLEY!**
Don't Look At Us Like We Have Six Heads!
By William Dettloff

68 **EATING DISORDERS: BOXING'S HIDDEN PERIL**
A Look At One Of The Sport's Most Dangerous Problems
By Ted Bodenrader

74 **THE RING UPDATE: HENRY COOPER**
"My Knighthood Is An Honor For The Whole Boxing Game In This Country"
By Brian Doogan

80 **CAN "TOO SHARP" JOHNSON PUT IT TOGETHER AGAIN?**
His Career, His Relationships, And His Reputation Hang In The Balance
By Johnnie Whitehead

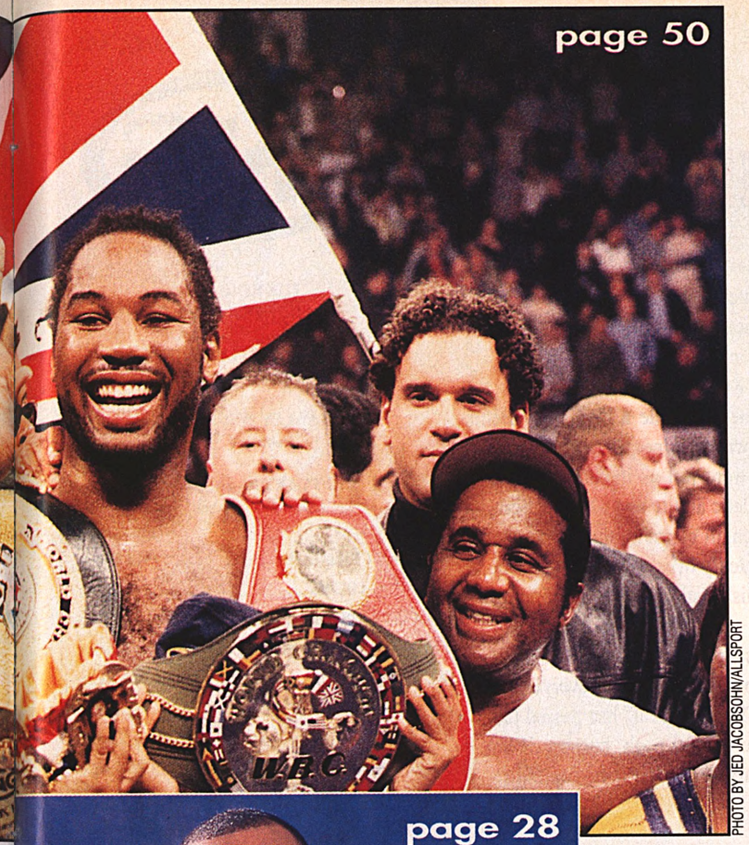


PHOTO BY JED JACOBSOHN/ALLSPORT

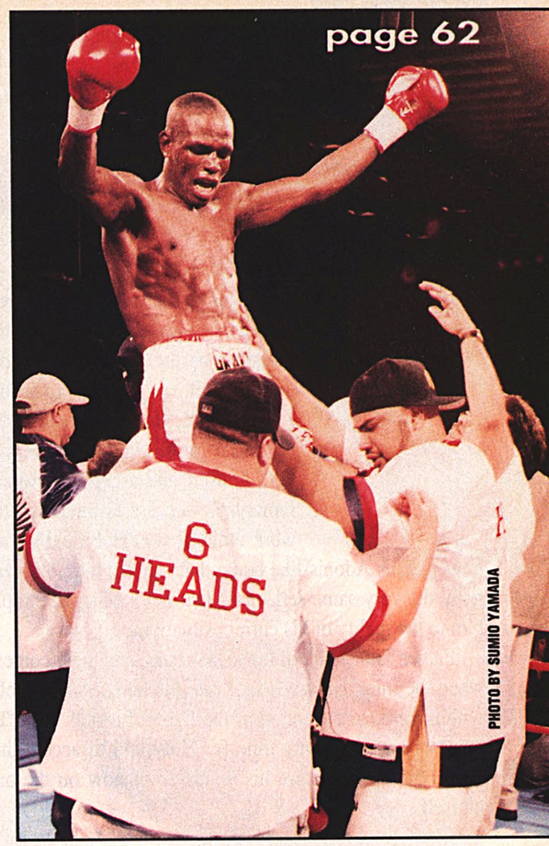


PHOTO BY SUMIO YAMADA

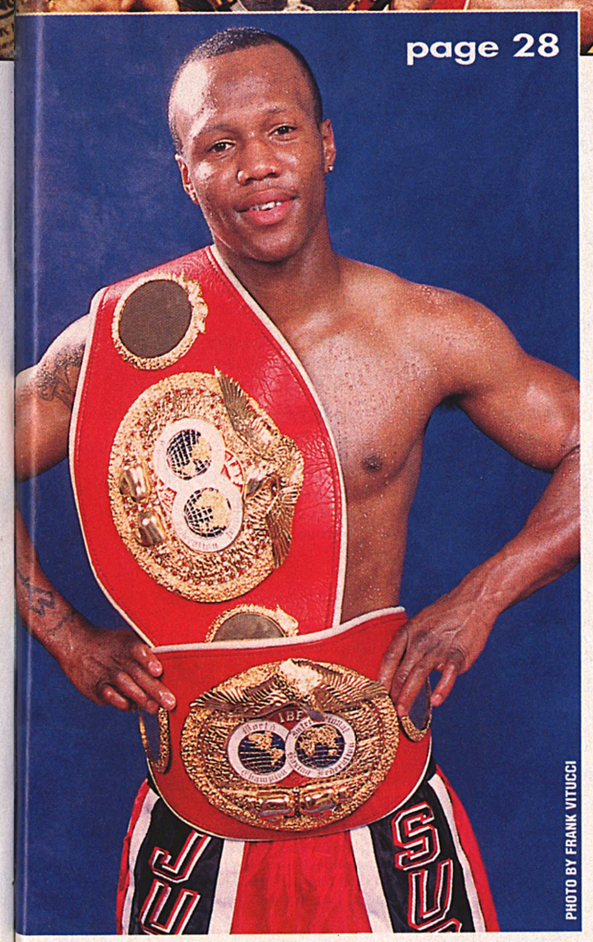


PHOTO BY FRANK VITUCCI

Cover: *Jones, Judah, Lewis, Mayweather, Tyson by Frank Vitucci*

Ayala, Morales, Trinidad, Vargas by Chris Farina

Ruiz, Tszyu by Tom Casino/Showtime

Lopez, Tapia by Brent Cook

Hopkins by Jason Ross Lavin

Mosley by Al Bello/Allsport

Cover Design: *Joe Kalman*

Ringside Reports And Analyses

86 FIGHTER OF THE MONTH & RINGSIDE REPORTS

Ratings

13 RATINGS ANALYSIS

14 THE RING'S INTERNATIONAL RATINGS

94 WBA, WBC, & IBF RATINGS

DEPARTMENTS

6 RINGSIDE, *by Nigel Collins*

8 ROUND ONE

16 NEW FACES: Super Middleweight Daniel Judah, *by Joe Santoliquito*

18 RYAN OUT LOUD, *by Jeff Ryan*

20 DIGGING DEEP, *by Ivan Goldman*

22 BEING THERE: The International Boxing Hall Of Fame, *by Nigel Collins*

24 CAMERA CLICKS

84 WORLDWIDE FIGHT RESULTS

96 THE RING CLASSIC: THE CRUISERWEIGHTS, *by Ed Schuyler*

102 THE A, B, C, AND DEAS OF BOXING, *by Tommy Deas*

104 COME OUT WRITING

106 LOOKING AHEAD, *by Eric Raskin*

RINGSIDE

Frequently, the very same attributes that make somebody successful will ultimately lead to their downfall. That certainly seems to be the case with Evander Holyfield, who stubbornly insisted, following his loss to John Ruiz, that he will fight on.

Holyfield, the classic overachiever, made a Hall of Fame career of proving the naysayers wrong. Unequivocal faith in both himself and a higher power were just as important to his remarkable success as were his athletic ability and a Promethean work ethic. It was Holyfield's strength of mind, more than the power of his Adonis-like body, that enabled him to repeatedly overcome the odds. But now, the very same self-belief that helped him accomplish fistic miracles is blinding him to the reality of his current situation.

Father Time is a ruthless taskmaster, and there comes a point in every athlete's life when the mind can no longer rule the body. And it's obvious to virtually everybody, with the crucial exception of the fighter himself, that "The Real Deal" has passed the point of no return. It's time for Holyfield to accept the painful truth, because if he thinks he can recapture his youth, from now on the only person he'll be fooling is himself.

***

Throughout the telecast of the Roy Jones-Derrick Harmon/Derrick Gainer-Victor Polo championship doubleheader, HBO's broadcast team, attempting to describe Jones and Gainer's style of fighting, charitably referred to them as "boxers." Well, where I come from (Philadelphia), guys who fight the way this pair of track stars did in Tampa are called something else. We call them "stinking runners."

There's a enormous difference between a "boxer" and a "runner." Sugar Shane Mosley, Felix Trinidad, and Floyd Mayweather are boxers; Hector Camacho (Sr. & Jr.), Gainer, and Jones are runners.

Although I would never pay to see them fight, and only watch them because it's part of my job, I don't blame the Camachos or Gainer for fighting the way they do. They're not good enough to beat top-notch opposition fighting any other way. Jones is another story. Had Reluctant Roy cared to mount a sustained attack, he could have disposed of Harmon in three or four rounds—tops. Instead, he gave us 10 boring rounds of hit-and-run and a damn good reason to turn off the TV the next time he fights, especially with Larry, Lamps, and Big George substituting illusory euphemisms for candid commentary.

***

What's the deal with race car driver Dale Earnhardt being counted out during SET's broadcast of the Ruiz-Holyfield rematch? The final 10-count has always been a special honor reserved for fighters and fight people. I've got nothing against Earnhardt or auto racing, but when was the last time a dead boxer was honored at a NASCAR event? And while I'm on the subject, how come no politicians oozed out from under a log to demand that auto racing be banned following Earnhardt's fatal accident on the last lap of the Daytona 500? Talk about a double standard, nobody even suggested cutting the race to 300 miles.

Nigel Collins
Editor-in-Chief

Volume 80, No. 7 July 2001

The RING

THE RING
"The Bible Of Boxing"

NATHANIEL S. FLEISCHER
1888-1972 Founder

STANLEY WESTON
Publisher

STUART M. SAKS
Associate Publisher

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF ..... Nigel Collins
MANAGING EDITOR ..... Eric Raskin
ASSOCIATE EDITOR ..... Joseph Santoliquito
SENIOR ART DIRECTOR ..... Walt Schmidt
ART DIRECTORS ..... Joseph Kalman
Teresa Landis
Greg Stevens
PRE-PRESS DIRECTOR ..... Cliff Campo
ASSISTANT EDITORS ..... Dave Lenker
Brandi Mankiewicz
SENIOR WRITER ..... William Dettloff

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
Kenneth J. Gudaitis

CIRCULATION DIRECTOR
David Tyler

NATIONAL CIRCULATION MANAGERS
Robert Nucci
Rose Ann Adolfi

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR
Vincent Bellissima
(215) 643-6385

ADVERTISING ASSISTANT
Dianne Weber

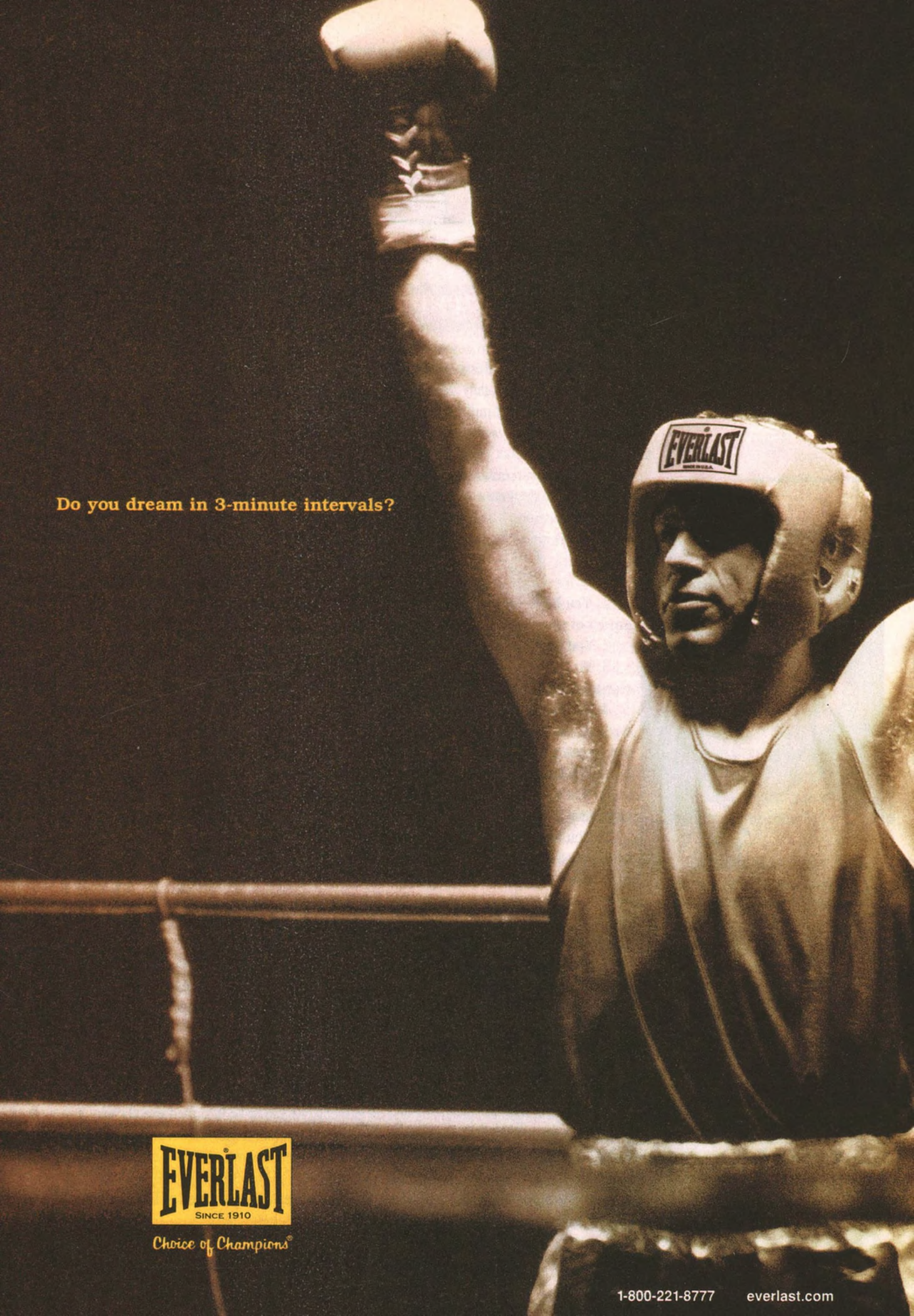
SUBSCRIPTION INQUIRIES
London Publishing Co.
P.O. Box 2029, Dept. 9
Marion, OH 43306-8121
(740) 375-2335

THE RING (ISSN: 0035-5410), Vol. 80, No. 7 (Extra, July 2001), is published monthly by London Publishing Co., 7002 W. Butler Pike, Ambler, PA 19002. Periodicals postage paid at Ambler, PA 19002 and additional post offices. Postmaster: Send change of address notices to: THE RING, P.O. Box 2029, Dept. 9, Marion, OH 43306-8121. Single copy price $5.95 ($8.95 in Canada, £3.50 in U.K.). Subscription price $59.64 in the U.S., $69.24 in Canada and remaining countries. Not responsible for the loss or non-return of unsolicited articles or photographs, which will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed envelope bearing the proper amount of postage.

The entire contents of this magazine are copyright ©2001 London Publishing Co. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without the written permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.

FOR ADVERTISING INQUIRIES AND RATES: (215) 643-6385. U.S. and Canadian distribution by Kable News Inc., 641 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10022. International distribution by Worldwide Media Service Inc., 115 East 23rd St., New York, NY 10010, U.K. distribution by Comag, Tavistock Rd., West Drayton, Middlesex UB77QE, England.

Printed in U.S.A.


EVERLAST
Do you dream in 3-minute intervals?
EVERLAST
SINCE 1910
Choice of Champions®
1-800-221-8777
everlast.com

ROUND ONE

ANOTHER STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

Although both the Professional Boxing Safety Act and the Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act are now the law of the land, they do no good unless they're enforced. Realizing that many boxers would have problems understanding the legalese, Greg Sirb, president of the Association of Boxing Commissioners, along with the National Association of Attorney Generals, has drafted an easy-to-understand "Professional Boxers Bill Of Rights."

"I'm going to mail out copies to every boxer licensed in Pennsylvania and urge commissioners in all the other states to do the same thing," said Sirb, who is also executive director of the Pennsylvania State Athletic Commission. "I'm also going to hang them up in gyms and have a stack with me at weigh-ins. Once boxers are educated, they can ask the right questions."

PHOTO BY JOE ZANOLLE

Sirb: Always looking out for the fighters

THE PROFESSIONAL BOXERS BILL OF RIGHTS

1. You have the right to be treated in a professional manner and to be fully informed about all aspects of your sport.

2. You have the right to have all terms of any contract with a promoter or manager in writing.

3. You have the right to have all contracts read and explained to you, either by the local commission representative or anyone of your choosing, including an attorney.

4. Before any bout, you have a right to know your opponent's name, their record, the weight class of the bout, the number of rounds of the bout, and the amount of your purse, including any travel or training expenses. To check on any boxer's record, including your own, contact Fight Fax at 856-782-8868.

5. You have a right to obtain, review, and keep copies of any of your contracts.

6. You have a right to directly receive any and all payments from a bout as set forth in your bout agreement.

7. You have the right to receive a written postbout accounting from either the promoter, your manager, or both, which shows how the total amount of your purse was distributed. If you have any deductions taken from your purse, you have the right to ask for a written accounting of what the deductions were, and why they were deducted from your purse.

8. You have the right to have a doctor at ringside at all times, as well as emergency medical and/or an ambulance at the location at all times.

9. You have a right to have medical insurance to cover any injuries resulting from a bout, and to know the name of the insurance company and the amount of the coverage that is being provided.

10. You have the right to hire individuals of your choice as your managers, trainers, or seconds. You are not required to hire any individual in order to obtain a bout.

11. You have a right to know why your ranking with any sanctioning body has changed and the reasons for the change. This may be done by writing to the organization and requesting to know why your ranking has been changed. The organization must respond to you, in writing, within seven (7) days.

12. You have a right to appeal any and all suspensions and to be informed exactly why you were suspended and the length of your suspension. To check if you are on the National Suspension List, just go onto the Internet at www.sportsnetwork.com and click onto Boxing, and then onto National Suspension List.

13. You have a right to contact your local commission or the Association of Boxing Commissioners to report any violations, ask questions, or seek any advice.

CHICO AND THE CAN

Diego Corrales was reluctant to surrender in the ring against Floyd Mayweather. In fact, he was furious that his corner stopped the one-sided fight in the 10th round. But the former IBF junior lightweight champion was quick to surrender a month later, pleading guilty in Sacramento Superior Court to beating his then-wife after months of refuting the allegations since his arrest last July.

The same day that Corrales pled guilty, his ex-wife, Maria, gave birth to their daughter, with whom she was pregnant at the time of the assault. Corrales also has two young sons, and his children were the reason "Chico" gave for accepting the two-year prison term rather than going to trial and risking a possible sentence of more than 20 years.

"I couldn't take the gamble of losing the time away from my children," Corrales, 23, said. "I want to be with my family."

With the trial less than a week away, Corrales pled guilty to felony domestic violence in exchange for a dismissal of two additional spousal abuse counts and charges of false imprisonment, making death threats, assault with a deadly weapon, and possession of a sawed-off shotgun. With good behavior, Corrales, who is scheduled for official sentencing on May 4, could be out in one year.

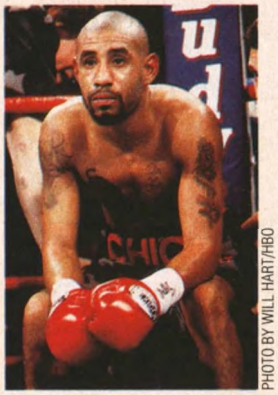


PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

It's been a rough year so far for Corrales

LOCK-UP FOR LEE

U.S. District Judge John Bissell sentenced Bob Lee, founder and former president of the IBF, to 22 months in jail and fined him $25,000 for his conviction on six of the 33 corruption charges leveled against him. Although a jury in August 2000 rejected the government's main charge that Lee accepted bribes in return for manipulating the IBF rankings, it did find him guilty of money laundering, two counts of tax evasion, and three counts of interstate travel in aid of racketeering.

Lee: 22 months in the big house

According to a report in the *Newark Star-Ledger*, Lee, 67, admitted no guilt and expressed no contrition. Instead, he told Judge Bissell that, "Everything I did, I did because I tried to make a difference. And I made a difference in the lives of many people. But now I have to be penalized for trying to make a difference."

Unimpressed by Lee's bid for leniency, Judge Bissell ordered him to begin serving his time by March 30. Lee also agreed to pay the IBF $50,000 in compensation and to a lifetime ban from boxing. Lee's lawyer, Gerald Krovatin, said he intends to appeal and would seek bail for his client while the appeal is pending.

"I think the sentence will open some eyes and ears, especially among anybody thinking about trying to rig the ratings," said Greg Sirb, executive director of the Pennsylvania State Athletic Commission and President of the Association of Boxing Commissioners. "But I don't think it's over yet. My hunch is that the IBF case was only the government's first shot, and that the second, third, and fourth shots will be coming."

ANOTHER BOWE BUMMER

Bowe: Arrested again

The sad saga of two-time former heavyweight champion Riddick Bowe, 33, continued on February 9, 2001, when he was arrested for assaulting his second wife, Terri Bowe, in the couple's Upper Brookville, New York, home. Bowe, who pleaded innocent, was released after posting $2,500 bail. A temporary order of protection was also issued, stipulating that Bowe must stay away from his wife and her two sons. Bowe's lawyer, Robert Altchiler, said the couple is splitting up after a "very brief marriage."

According to the Associated Press, Terri Bowe told police that her husband twisted her arm, struck her head, slapped her, and, when she tried to run away, grabbed her, dragged her across the floor, and threatened her life. Police claimed that they found Mrs. Bowe cut and bruised when they arrived at the scene.

This was not the first time Bowe had run afoul of the law since he retired from the ring following his disqualification win over Andrew Golota in December '96. Bowe was sentenced to 30 days in prison in February 2000 after pleading guilty to a domestic violence charge, which was part of a plea bargain in a case involving the kidnapping of his first wife, Judy, and their five children. Bowe was treated leniently in that case because his lawyer, Johnnie Cochran, convinced a federal judge that the ex-fighter suffered from boxing-related head injuries that made him irresponsible.

TV FIGHTS OF THE MONTH

DATE	WINNER/LOSER	NETWORK	DIVISION	SIGNIFICANCE	MATCHUP	RESULT
2-2-01	Anthony Hanshaw KO 5 Jose Spearman	ESPN2	sm	C	C+	B-
Hanshaw passes an important test, looks like one of the better non-Olympian prospects						
2-2-01	Julio Gonzalez W 12 Julian Letterlough	ESPN2	lh	B-	A	A
If 2001 produces a better fight than this, it will be a very good year indeed						
2-3-01	Fahlan Sakkreerin D 12 Andy Tabanas	Show	jfl	B-	B+	D-
Where in Bobby Czyz' contract with Showtime does it state that he must say "one and done" 30 times a round?						
2-3-01	**Kostya Tszyu KO 7 Sharmba Mitchell**	**Show**	**WBC/WBA jw**	**A**	**A-**	**C+**
Looked to us like the more Tszyu landed, the more Mitchell's knee hurt, not the other way around						
2-3-01	Hector Camacho Sr. W 10 Troy Lowry	HBO	m	C-	D	D-
It's official: Between Butterbean and Camacho, there are no more undefeated Midwest tomato cans						
2-3-01	Hector Camacho Jr. W 12 Rocky Martinez	HBO	jw	B	C	D+
Junior preps for looming title shot with solid thrashing of tough but punchless Martinez						
2-9-01	Aaron Davis KO 8 Vinny Paz	ESPN2	sm	C	B+	C+
Whose idea was it to give Paz the phone number of Mickey Rourke's plastic surgeon?						
2-10-01	Harry Simon KO 5 Wayne Alexander	Show	jm	B-	C	B
Simon isn't all that good, but apparently he can be fun to watch against the right guy						
2-10-01	Adan Vargas W 12 Jorge Eliecer Julio	Tel	b	B+	A-	A-
Vargas drops Julio in fifth and wins grueling war; who wouldn't pay to see him against Tim Austin?						
2-11-01	Ray Mercer KO 2 Jeff Pegues	FOXSN	h	C-	D+	C
Call us sentimental, but we think it's kind of fun to have Mercer around again						
2-11-01	Juan Manuel Marquez KO 7 Sean Fletcher	Uni	f	C+	D	C+
Marquez decks outgunned Fletcher four times, hopes for another title shot						
2-16-01	Emanuel Burton KO 10 Mike Griffith	ESPN2	jw	C+	B-	C
If you want evidence that there are good, tough fighters around who aren't champs, Burton's your guy						
2-17-01	**Andrew Lewis KO 7 James Page**	**HBO**	**WBA w**	**A**	**A-**	**B+**
"Six Heads" near flawless in title win, but is he that good or was Page that bad?						
2-17-01	**Erik Morales W 12 Guty Espadas**	**HBO**	**WBC f**	**A**	**B+**	**C+**
Morales notches first defense of, er, we mean, wins title with close decision over gutty Guty						
2-18-01	Enrique Sanchez Tech. Draw 7 Carlos Contreras	FOXSN	jf	B-	B-	D+
This was heating up before a headbutt split Sanchez open; look for rematch soon						
2-18-01	Antonio Diaz KO 4 Gilbert Quiroz	Uni	jw	B-	D	C-
Proving there is life after Shane, Diaz rises from second-round knockdown to destroy poor Quiroz						
2-23-01	Jesus Chavez KO 7 Tom Johnson	ESPN2	jl	B+	D-	D+
Sure Johnson was brave, but so is Chavez; every win brings him closer to Floyd Mayweather						
2-24-01	**Derrick Gainer W 12 Victor Polo**	**HBO**	**WBA f**	**A-**	**C+**	**D**
That's boring! That's boring!						
2-24-01	**Roy Jones KO 10 Derrick Harmon**	**HBO**	**Unified lh**	**A**	**D**	**C-**
Even Mozart gets dull if you hear the same notes over and over; come on Roy, give us something						
3-2-01	Alex Bunema W 10 Tony Marshall	ESPN2	jm	C+	B+	C
Rugged Bunema outworks equally rugged but slightly worn out Marshall, takes split nod						
3-3-01	Christy Martin W 10 Jeanne Martinez	PPV	w	D	D+	B
Good slugfest, and not just for a chick fight; no Mia St. Johns here						
3-3-01	Manuel Gomez W 10 Miguel Angel Gonzalez	PPV	w	C+	D+	D+
Great sixth round, lousy fight; Gonzalez outworked and outfought by journeyman						
3-3-01	**Tim Austin KO 6 Jesus Perez**	**PPV**	**IBF b**	**A-**	**D-**	**C-**
Just what does that government-appointed monitor over at the IBF do all day? Perez a terrible number-one challenger						
3-3-01	**John Ruiz W 12 Evander Holyfield**	**PPV**	**WBA h**	**A**	**B-**	**B**
Who would have predicted five years ago that Ruiz would win a title (more or less) and David Tua would not?						

Category Explanation: "Significance"—The importance of the bout to the division and the fighters' futures; "Matchup"—The quality of the fighters and the prefight determination of how their styles will mesh; "Result"—How the bout turned out, from the viewer's perspective.

(World title fights in **bold** type)

Division key: h—heavyweight; c—cruiserweight; lh—light heavyweight; sm—super middleweight; m—middleweight; jm—junior middleweight; w—welterweight; jw—junior welterweight; l—lightweight; jl—junior lightweight; f—featherweight; jf—junior featherweight; b—bantamweight; jb—junior bantamweight; fl—flyweight; jfl—junior flyweight; s—strawweight

Network key: PPV—Pay-Per-View; Show—Showtime; FOXSN—Fox SportsNet; Uni—Univision; Tel—Telemundo

THE BOXING BOOKSHELF

When Rubin "Hurricane" Carter went to jail, he started writing a book because he was seeking freedom. When James "Quick" Tillis went to jail, he started writing a book just because he felt he had an interesting story to tell. And he was right.

Thinkin Big (ECW Press, 177 pages, $17.95), which Tillis began writing in 1997 when he was "rottin in a Tulsa jail cell for sendin my $100-a-month child-support checks to the wrong address" and finished on the outside with the help of ghost writer J. Engleman Price, is a colorful account of the life of the one-time heavyweight hopeful. Tillis comes off as a lovable innocent, who tried his best to listen to God and Mama, but all too often put crucial decisions in the hands of the managers who would repeatedly screw him. Tillis' excuses for losing nearly all of his biggest fights (he went 0-9 against former or future heavyweight champions) start to wear thin after a while, but the stories that go along with them are entertaining regardless. Particularly notable is Tillis' recollection of his most famous fight, when he became the first to last the distance with Mike Tyson:

"Staggering toward each other before the decision was announced, Mike held on to me, just as sure about his loss as I was about my win. 'You beat me, you beat me,' he swore under his stinky breath so that only I could hear him. 'I'll give you a remath … a remath,' he lisped in his high little voice, gaspin in between words, tryin to find air in the ring."

The decisions often went against Tillis, in the ring and in life, but that's not the point of the book. *Thinkin Big* is about a kid from Oklahoma given a slim chance of ever amounting to anything, who latched onto a dream and followed it through as best he could. It's a straight-from-the-heart autobiography, and a lively stroll through a memorable, if not exactly legendary, career.

—Eric Raskin

PEDRO CARRASCO, 1943-2001

Carrasco (right) and rival Ramos share a laugh

Former WBC lightweight champion Pedro Carrasco, best known in the United States for his contentious three-bout series with Mando Ramos, died of a heart attack in Madrid, Spain, on January 28, 2001. He was 57.

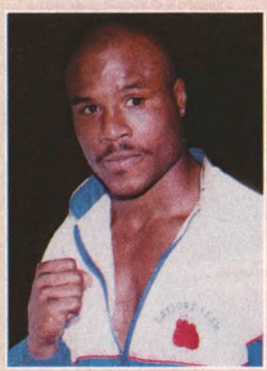
Carrasco, a stylish boxer in the stand-up European tradition, captured Euro titles at 135 and 140 pounds before winning the vacant WBC lightweight title with a controversial DQ win over Ramos on November 5, 1971, in Madrid. Carrasco had already been knocked down four times when Nigerian referee Samuel Odubote disqualified Ramos for allegedly throwing illegal punches. Odubote's action was termed a "shameless injustice" by the Spanish press.

Ironically, the next year, Ramos won the title via unpopular split decision in a rematch held before 15,816 fans at the Los Angeles Sports Arena.

"So now there have been two bad decisions," said Carrasco's manager, Umberto Branchini. "If there's any small justice left in the world, I think they'll offer us a third fight."

They did, and in a rubber match held in Madrid on June 28, 1972, Ramos retained the title with a close but clear-cut decision. Carrasco won two more fights and retired at the end of the year with an overall record of 105-3-2 (66).

OUTSIDE THE ROPES



Taylor: Gets house arrest

The Japan Boxing Commission decided in mid-February to indefinitely ban boxers from the Philippines from fighting in their country, due to a number of scandals involving illegal escapes by the Filipinos. The last straw came when bantamweight **Ricky Gayamo** came to Tokyo to fight in February, and returned home without his manager, who disappeared before the fight, or his trainer, who vanished afterward … Two-division former champion **Meldrick Taylor** was sentenced to nine to 23 months of house arrest in late-January after pleading guilty to indecent assault charges stemming from an April 2000 incident with his ex-fiancee … A New York court determined in early-February that **Graciano Rocchigiani** is entitled to collect damages to be determined from the WBC for failing to recognize him as their light heavyweight champion after he defeated **Michael Nunn** in '98. Rocchigiani was led to believe that **Roy Jones** had relinquished the title to face **Buster Douglas**, but when Jones later pulled out of the Douglas fight, the WBC ruled that Rochigianni's fight with Nunn had merely been for the "interim" title … The British Boxing Board of Control denied former bantam champ **Wayne McCullough** a license in early-February, despite the fact that the Nevada Athletic Commission had given "The Pocket Rocket" a clean bill of health. A brain scan in Belfast, Ireland, last October had uncovered a cyst, but doctors in Nevada later concluded that it was benign … A couple of personnel changes at HBO were announced in late-January. Former HBO attorney **Xavier D. James** assumed the role of assistant to Vice President of Programming **Kery Davis**, the same position Davis held when **Lou DiBella** was in charge. And as you've probably noticed if you've been watching *KO Nation* lately, ring announcer **Ed Lover** was let go by the network. Wipe away the tears, folks … There are quite a few deaths to report this month, including three active fighters: Italian junior lightweight **Prisco Perugino**, holder of a minor title, committed suicide at the age of 28 in late-January; South African bantam champ **Sandile Sobandla** died in early-February in a car crash near his home in Cape Town; and French junior welterweight champion **Frederic Noto**, 27, was found gunned down in his home on the island of Corsica in mid-February … Also passing this month was 1950s European middleweight champion **Tiberio Mitri**, who died in mid-February at the age of 74 after being hit by a train. The Italian was best known for challenging **Jake LaMotta** for the world title at Madison Square Garden in July '50 … And three-time former European bantam champ **Piero Rollo** died in mid-February at the age of 73. Rollo lost by 10th-round kayo to **Eder Jofre** in March '61 in his only world title bid … *Forbes* magazine recently released its annual list of the highest paid athletes, and three boxers made the top 10 for 2000. **Mike Tyson** checked in at number three with $48-million, while **Lennox Lewis** and **Oscar De La Hoya** tied for eighth with $23-million apiece … A quick tip for boxing fans in New York: Former promoter **Aaron Braunstein** recently began a weekly all-boxing radio show in the Big Apple. *The Aaron Braunstein Show* can be heard from 10 to 11 every Thursday night on WPAT 930 AM in New York City.

Mitri: Dead at 74

THE PUNCHLINES

"This is every fighter's nightmare: Tyson with the munchies."

—*Tonight Show* host Jay Leno, on Mike Tyson testing positive for marijuana following his win over Andrew Golota

"It is sometimes hard to get all the information on boxers, and we obviously missed the fact that Darrin was dead. It is regrettable."

—WBO President Francisco Valcarcel, on his organization allowing super middleweight Darrin Morris to continue to move up their rankings four months after his death

AL KRATZER'S VIEW

"THE BIBLE OF BOXING"

RATINGS ANALYSIS

(For period ended March 12, 2001)

POUND-FOR-POUND

1. **SHANE MOSLEY**
   Welterweight
2. **FELIX TRINIDAD**
   Junior Middleweight
3. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER**
   Junior Lightweight
4. **ROY JONES**
   Light Heavyweight
5. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA**
   Welterweight
6. **NASEEM HAMED**
   Featherweight
7. **LENNOX LEWIS**
   Heavyweight
8. **BERNARD HOPKINS**
   Middleweight
9. **MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA**
   Junior Featherweight
10. **RICARDO LOPEZ**
    Junior Flyweight

HEAVYWEIGHTS: John Ruiz debuts at number three, thanks to his unanimous decision over Evander Holyfield to win the WBA heavyweight title. Holyfield (fourth last issue) falls to seventh. Inactive and ailing Michael Grant (formerly eighth) exits, as does Oleg Maskaev (seventh last issue), following his kayo loss to Mount Whitaker, who comes aboard at number nine.

CRUISERWEIGHTS: No changes.

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS: No changes.

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS: Although the WBA stripped Bruno Girard of its 168-pound title for failing to defend against Manuel Siaca, the Frenchman retains his number-three position. Meanwhile, Byron Mitchell (ninth last issue) moves up to the fourth spot by stopping Siaca for the vacant title.

MIDDLEWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS: Harry Simon (sixth last issue) leapfrogs over Francisco Castillejo (fourth last issue) and Ike Quartey (formerly fifth) due to his exciting knockout of Wayne Alexander, causing Castillejo and Quartey to slip to fifth and sixth, respectively. Previously unranked Alex Bunema replaces Tony Marshall at ninth after outpointing the Albany, New York, veteran.

WELTERWEIGHTS: Andrew Lewis claimed the vacant WBA crown with an impressive kayo of former champ James Page, elevating himself from eighth to third. Derrell Coley (ninth last issue) is gone because he hasn't fought in more than a year. This pushes Kofi Jantuah (10th last issue) up a notch to ninth, and makes room for Daniel Santos to debut at number 10.

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS: No changes.

LIGHTWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS: Even though Diego Corrales has been convicted of domestic abuse, he retains his current number-four ranking until he's sentenced.

FEATHERWEIGHTS: Even though he lost the WBC title to Erik Morales via highly controversial decision, Guty Espadas (fifth last issue) advances to fourth on the strength of his performance. This forces WBA titlist Derrick Gainer (fourth last issue) down one spot. Gainer's demotion was also influenced by his mediocre showing against unranked Victor Polo.

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS: Nestor Garza (fifth last issue) exits because he's been inactive for more than a year. Streaking Manny Pacquaio (seventh last issue) takes over Garza's old spot, and Carlos Contreras enters at number seven, following a technical draw with sixth-ranked Enrique Sanchez.

BANTAMWEIGHTS: Adan Vargas (fifth last issue) and Johnny Bredahl (fourth last issue) have switched positions due to Vargas' solid win over Jorge Eliecer Julio.

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS: New WBA champ Celes Kobayashi crashes the ratings at number two following his 10th-round knockout of Leo Gamez (second last issue). Gamez tumbles to seventh. Hideki Todaka (seventh last issue) departs.

FLYWEIGHTS: Newcomer Pongsaklek Wonjongkam blasts his way to the third position with a first-round kayo of Malcolm Tunacao, which also garnered him the WBC title. Loser Tunacao skids to ninth, while former champ Chatchai Dutchboy Gym (fifth last issue) exits due to the fact that he hasn't fought in more than a year.

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS: Rosendo Alvarez (fifth last issue) changes places with Bebis Mendoza (fourth last issue), following Alvarez' close decision victory over Mendoza to capture the WBA title.

STRAWWEIGHTS: No changes.

POUND-FOR-POUND: Erik Morales' uninspiring and debatable win over Guty Espadas, a decision many observers thought went to the wrong fighter, was enough to drop "El Terrible" from the top 10. His demotion allows Marco Antonio Barrera (10th last issue) to advance to ninth, and Ricardo Lopez to regain a foothold at number 10. ■

THE RING RATINGS

For Period Ended March 12, 2001

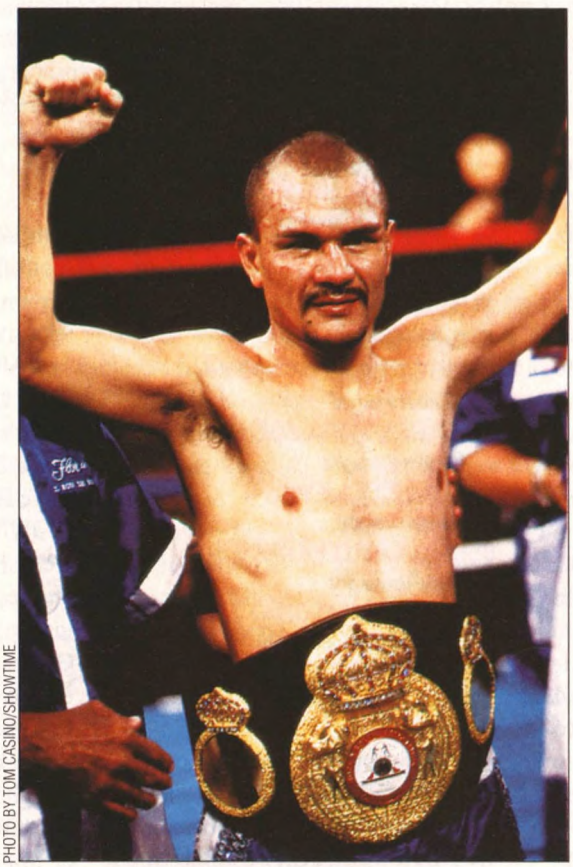


PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Rosendo Alvarez climbed one spot at junior flyweight by decisioning Bebis Mendoza for the WBA belt

How Our Ratings Are Compiled

In each division, fighters are ranked according to their abilities and accomplishments.

Being champion does not necessarily mean a fighter will be rated at the top of his weight class.

These ratings reflect how the best fighters in the world rate against one another.

Ratings By The Editors

Records By Fight Fax Inc.

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight Unlimited

1. **LENNOX LEWIS** England *38-1-1 (WBC/IBF Champ)*
2. **MIKE TYSON** Catskill, NY *49-3*
3. **JOHN RUIZ** Chelsea, MA *37-4 (WBA Champ)*
4. **KIRK JOHNSON** Canada *30-0-1*
5. **DAVID TUA** New Zealand *37-2*
6. **WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO** Ukraine *35-1*
7. **EVANDER HOLYFIELD** Fairburn, GA *37-5-1*
8. **HASIM RAHMAN** Baltimore, MD *34-2*
9. **MOUNT WHITAKER** Mission Hills, CA *23-1*
10. **CHRIS BYRD** Flint, MI *32-2*

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 154 pounds

1. **FELIX TRINIDAD** Puerto Rico *39-0 (WBA/IBF Champ)*
2. **FERNANDO VARGAS** Oxnard, CA *20-1*
3. **WINKY WRIGHT** St. Petersburg, FL *41-3*
4. **HARRY SIMON** Namibia *21-0*
5. **FRANCISCO CASTILLEJO** Spain *51-4 (WBC Champ)*
6. **IKE QUARTEY** Ghana *34-2-1*
7. **BRONCO McKART** Monroe, MI *42-3*
8. **YORY BOY CAMPAS** Mexico *77-4*
9. **ALEX BUNEMA** Dallas, TX *19-2-1*
10. **J.C. CANDELO** Denver, CO *22-3-3*

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 126 pounds

1. **NASEEM HAMED** England *35-0*
2. **ERIK MORALES** Mexico *40-0 (WBC Champ)*
3. **MBULELO BOTILE** South Africa *27-1 (IBF Champ)*
4. **GUTY ESPADAS** Mexico *33-3*
5. **DERRICK GAINER** Pensacola, FL *35-5 (WBA Champ)*
6. **JOHNNY TAPIA** Albuquerque, NM *48-2-2*
7. **FRED NORWOOD** St. Louis, MO *37-1-1*
8. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ** Mexico *34-2*
9. **MANUEL MEDINA** Mexico *58-11*
10. **ISTVAN KOVACS** Germany *20-0*

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 122 pounds

1. **MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA** Mexico *52-3*
2. **BONES ADAMS** Henderson, KY *40-3-3 (WBA Champ)*
3. **LEHLO LEDWABA** South Africa *32-1-1 (IBF Champ)*
4. **WILLIE JORRIN** Sacramento, CA *28-0 (WBC Champ)*
5. **MANNY PACQUAIO** Philippines *30-2*
6. **ENRIQUE SANCHEZ** Mexico *28-1-2*
7. **CARLOS CONTRERAS** Mexico *17-4-2*
8. **ANTONIO CERMENO** Venezuela *38-3*
9. **OSCAR LARIOS** Mexico *38-3-1*
10. **MICHAEL BRODIE** England *30-1*

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 118 pounds

1. **PAULIE AYALA** Ft. Worth, TX *31-1 (WBA Champ)*
2. **TIM AUSTIN** Cincinnati, OH *22-0-1 (IBF Champ)*
3. **VEERAPOL SAHAPROM** Thailand *29-1 (WBC Champ)*
4. **ADAN VARGAS** Mexico *36-2-1*
5. **JOHNNY BREDAHL** Denmark *49-2*
6. **JORGE LACIERVA** Mexico *18-3-3*
7. **RICARDO BARAJAS** Mexico *22-1-1*
8. **MAURICIO MARTINEZ** Panama *19-3-1*
9. **CUAUHTEMOC GOMEZ** Mexico *48-8*
10. **GENARO GARCIA** Mexico *23-3*

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 190 pounds

1. **JUAN CARLOS GOMEZ**
   Germany *32-0 (WBC Champ)*
2. **VIRGIL HILL**
   Bismarck, ND *46-3 (WBA Champ)*
3. **VASSILIY JIROV**
   Kazakhstan *27-0 (IBF Champ)*
4. **JOHNNY NELSON**
   England *39-12-1*
5. **MARCELO DOMINGUEZ**
   Argentina *30-3-1*
6. **CARL THOMPSON**
   England *28-5*
7. **ARTHUR WILLIAMS**
   Pensacola, FL *34-5-1*
8. **JAMES TONEY**
   Las Vegas, NV *60-4-2*
9. **FABRICE TIOZZO**
   France *42-2*
10. **LOUIS AZILLE**
    Jersey City, NJ *15-0-2*

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight limit: 175 pounds

1. **ROY JONES**
   Pensacola, FL *44-1 (WBC/WBA/IBF Champ)*
2. **DARIUSZ MICHALCZEWSKI**
   Germany *43-0*
3. **ERIC HARDING**
   Philadephia, PA *19-1-1*
4. **REGGIE JOHNSON**
   Houston, TX *41-6-1*
5. **MONTELL GRIFFIN**
   Chicago, IL *40-3*
6. **CHRIS JOHNSON**
   Canada *26-2-1*
7. **JULIO GONZALEZ**
   Huntington Beach, CA *26-0*
8. **ANTONIO TARVER**
   Orlando, FL *17-1*
9. **GREG WRIGHT**
   Bronx, NY *18-6-2*
10. **DERRICK HARMON**
    Chicago, IL *20-2*

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 168 pounds

1. **SVEN OTTKE**
   Germany *21-0 (IBF Champ)*
2. **JOE CALZAGHE**
   Wales *30-0*
3. **BRUNO GIRARD**
   France *38-2-1*
4. **BYRON MITCHELL**
   Ozark, AL *23-1-1 (WBA Champ)*
5. **CHARLES BREWER**
   Philadelphia, PA *36-7*
6. **THOMAS TATE**
   Houston, TX *39-6*
7. **DAVEY HILTON**
   Canada *39-2-3 (WBC Champ)*
8. **DINGAAN THOBELA**
   South Africa *40-8-2*
9. **GLENN CATLEY**
   England *26-4*
10. **JAMES BUTLER**
    Bronx, NY *17-1*

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 160 pounds

1. **BERNARD HOPKINS**
   Philadelphia, PA *38-2-1 (IBF Champ)*
2. **WILLIAM JOPPY**
   Washington, D.C. *32-1-1 (WBA Champ)*
3. **KEITH HOLMES**
   Washington, D.C. *35-2 (WBC Champ)*
4. **ARMAND KRAJNC**
   Sweden *24-0*
5. **ANTWUN ECHOLS**
   Davenport, IA *24-4-1*
6. **HASSINE CHERIFI**
   France *31-4-1*
7. **SYD VANDERPOOL**
   Canada *28-2*
8. **CARL DANIELS**
   St. Louis, MO *47-3-1*
9. **HOWARD EASTMAN**
   England *30-0*
10. **ANTONIO PERUGINO**
    Italy *16-0*

WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 147 pounds

1. **SHANE MOSLEY**
   Pomona, CA *37-0 (WBC Champ)*
2. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA**
   Whittier, CA *32-2*
3. **ANDREW LEWIS**
   Guyana *21-0-1 (WBA Champ)*
4. **VERNON FORREST**
   Atlanta, GA *31-0*
5. **OBA CARR**
   Detroit, MI *52-3-1*
6. **WILFREDO RIVERA**
   Puerto Rico *32-4-1*
7. **THOMAS DAMGAARD**
   Denmark *24-0*
8. **SHANNAN TAYLOR**
   Australia *28-1-1*
9. **KOFI JANTUAH**
   Ghana *20-0*
10. **DANIEL SANTOS**
    Puerto Rico *24-2-1*

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 140 pounds

1. **KOSTYA TSZYU**
   Australia *26-1-1 (WBA/WBC Champ)*
2. **ZAB JUDAH**
   Brooklyn, NY *26-0 (IBF Champ)*
3. **SHARMBA MITCHELL**
   Washington, D.C. *47-3*
4. **ANTONIO DIAZ**
   Coachella, CA *34-3*
5. **ENER JULIO**
   Colombia *21-3*
6. **RANDALL BAILEY**
   Miami, FL *23-1*
7. **TERRONN MILLETT**
   St. Louis, MO *22-2-1*
8. **MICKY WARD**
   Lowell, MA *35-10*
9. **JOHN-JOHN MOLINA**
   Puerto Rico *52-6*
10. **BEN TACKIE**
    Ghana *21-2*

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 135 pounds

1. **JOSE LUIS CASTILLO**
   Mexico *42-4-1 (WBC Champ)*
2. **STEVE JOHNSTON**
   Denver, CO *30-2-1*
3. **PAUL SPADAFORA**
   Pittsburgh, PA *32-0 (IBF Champ)*
4. **TAKANORI HATAKEYAMA**
   Japan *24-1-3 (WBA Champ)*
5. **ANGEL MANFREDY**
   Gary, IN *35-5-1*
6. **ARTUR GRIGORIAN**
   Uzbekistan *32-0*
7. **COLIN DUNNE**
   England *32-1*
8. **JESSE JAMES LEIJA**
   San Antonio, TX *42-5-2*
9. **CESAR BAZAN**
   Mexico *38-4-1*
10. **GILBERTO SERRANO**
    Venezuela *20-5-1*

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 130 pounds

1. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER**
   Grand Rapids, MI *25-0 (WBC Champ)*
2. **JOEL CASAMAYOR**
   Miami, FL *24-0 (WBA Champ)*
3. **ACELINO FREITAS**
   Brazil *29-0*
4. **DIEGO CORRALES**
   Sacramento, CA *33-1*
5. **STEVE FORBES**
   Las Vegas, NV *19-1 (IBF Champ)*
6. **JESUS CHAVEZ**
   Mexico *34-1*
7. **JONGKWON BAEK**
   South Korea *22-1-1*
8. **LAKVA SIM**
   Mongolia *12-2-1*
9. **YONG SOO CHOI**
   South Korea *27-3-1*
10. **JOHN BROWN**
    Atlantic City, NJ *22-8*

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 115 pounds

1. **MASAMORI TOKUYAMA**
   North Korea *23-2-1 (WBC Champ)*
2. **CELES KOBAYASHI**
   Japan *23-4-3 (WBA Champ)*
3. **FELIX MACHADO**
   Venezuela *20-3-1 (IBF Champ)*
4. **IN JOO CHO**
   South Korea *18-1*
5. **GERRY PENALOSA**
   Philippines *42-3-2*
6. **JESUS ROJAS**
   Venezuela *33-8-3*
7. **LEO GAMEZ**
   Venezuela *33-8-1*
8. **YOKTHAI SITHOAR**
   Thailand *22-1-1*
9. **SAMSON TOYOTA-THAILAND**
   Thailand *38-0*
10. **ADONIS RIVAS**
    Nicaragua *16-1-1*

FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 112 pounds

1. **ERIC MOREL**
   Madison, WI *28-0 (WBA Champ)*
2. **IRENE PACHECO**
   Colombia *25-0 (IBF Champ)*
3. **PONGSAKLEK WONJONGKAM**
   Thailand *34-2 (WBC Champ)*
4. **HAWK MAKEPULA**
   South Africa *18-1*
5. **MEDGOEN TOYOTA-THAILAND**
   Thailand *20-1*
6. **SAEN SOR PLOENCHIT**
   Thailand *38-1*
7. **ALEJANDRO MONTIEL**
   Mexico *44-3*
8. **FERNANDO MONTIEL**
   Mexico *20-0-1*
9. **MALCOLM TUNACAO**
   Philippines *11-1-1*
10. **ALEXANDER MUNOZ**
    Venezuela *15-0*

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 108 pounds

1. **RICARDO LOPEZ**
   Mexico *49-0-1 (IBF Champ)*
2. **YOSAM CHOI**
   South Korea *23-1 (WBC Champ)*
3. **PICHIT C. SIRIWAT**
   Thailand *22-1*
4. **ROSENDO ALVAREZ**
   Nicaragua *28-2-1 (WBA Champ)*
5. **BEBIS MENDOZA**
   Colombia *27-1*
6. **MELCHOR COB-CASTRO**
   Mexico *60-6-4*
7. **WILL GRIGSBY**
   St. Paul, MN *15-2-1*
8. **JORGE ARCE**
   Mexico *26-3-1*
9. **HIDENOBU HONDA**
   Japan *22-1*
10. **FAHLAN SAKKREERIN**
    Thailand *42-2-2*

STRAWWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 105 pounds

1. **JOSE AGUIRRE**
   Mexico *25-1-1 (WBC Champ)*
2. **KEITARO HOSHINO**
   Japan *21-6 (WBA Champ)*
3. **JOMA GAMBOA**
   Philippines *29-6-1*
4. **NOEL ARAMBULET**
   Venezuela *12-2-1*
5. **CHANA PORPAOIN**
   Thailand *41-1-2*
6. **WANDEE SINGWANGCHA**
   Thailand *25-4*
7. **SONGKRAM PORPAOIN**
   Thailand *20-2-1*
8. **KERMIN GUARDIA**
   Colombia *32-2*
9. **JOSE GARCIA**
   Colombia *22-5-1*
10. **DANIEL REYES**
    Colombia *24-0*

NEW FACES

DANIEL JUDAH

Super Middleweight

By Joe Santoliquito

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

PRO RECORD

1999		
June 18	David McCluskey, W. Palm Beach, FL	W 4
Dec. 4	Adrian Miller, Augusta, GA	KO 1
2000		
Feb. 1	Keith Jarrett, Punta Gorda, FL	D 4
Feb. 12	Kevin Russell, Uncasville, CT	W 4
April 29	Predrag Cvetanovic, New York City	KO 1
Aug. 5	Eric Brown, Uncasville	KO 2
Aug. 26	Jason Dietrich, Las Vegas	W 4
Oct. 6	Eric Starr, Atlantic City	KO 5
Dec. 1	Eric Howard, Las Vegas	W 6
2001		
Jan. 13	Steve Detar, Uncasville	KO 3

FIGHTS	WON	LOST	DRAW	KOs
10	9	0	1	5

From their staccato, machine-gun-like syntax, you can tell they're brothers. After that, however, there's a marked difference between Daniel and Zab Judah. For all of the good things that have happened to his younger brother on the way to a world title, Daniel Judah has experienced the polar opposite.

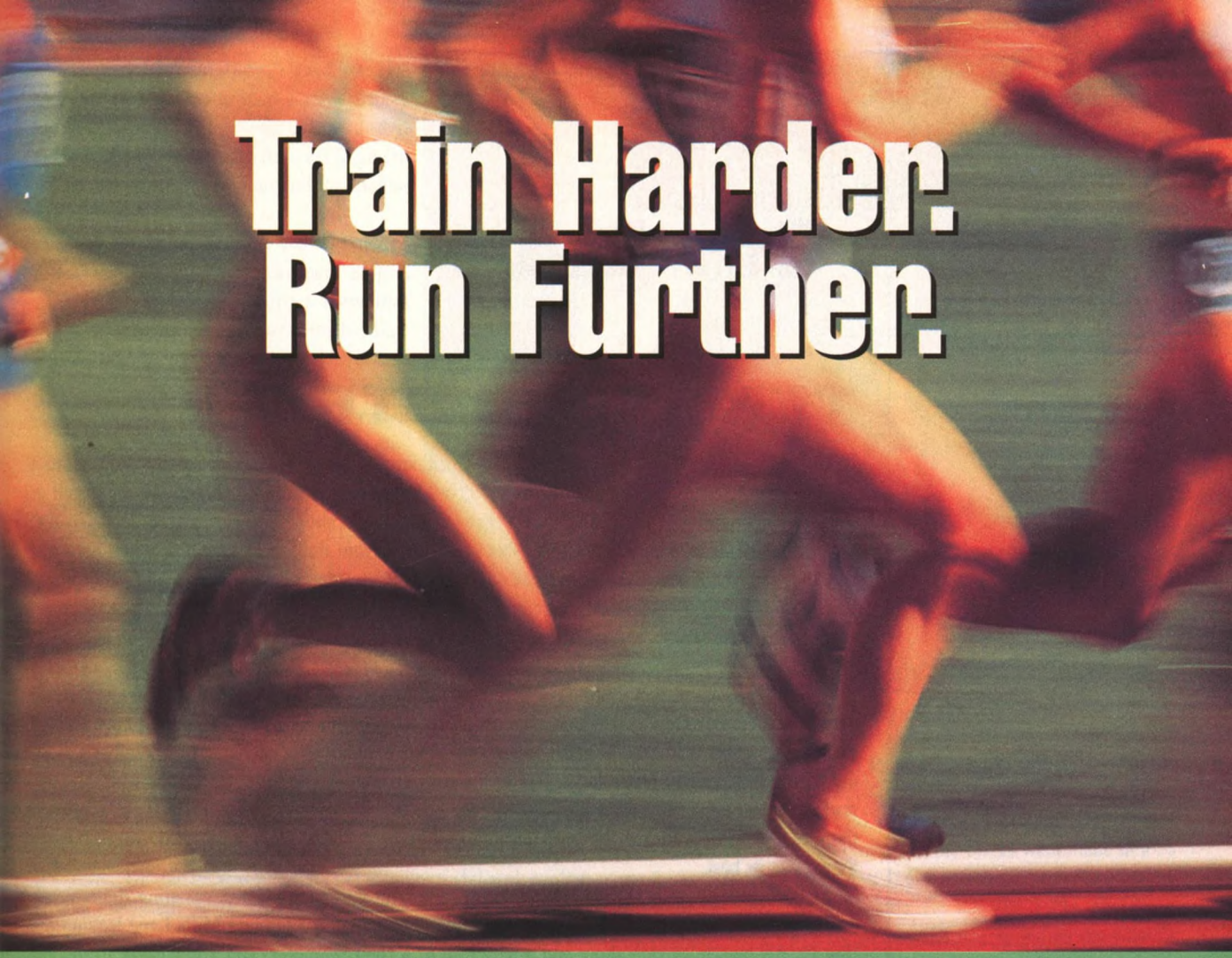
Preparing for the 1994 New York City Golden Gloves Tournament, Daniel was jumped by five guys who wanted his sneakers and coat. He was smashed in the face with a metal pipe that broke his jaw, ending any chance of a Golden Gloves title.

In 1997, Daniel, the number-four ranked 165-pound amateur in the United States, was aiming for the 2000 Olympic team when he suffered ligament damage from a dislocated left shoulder that required three hours of surgery to repair. Daniel spent the next year recovering. When, after an arduous rehab, he was ready to return to the ring in '98, Daniel was faced with an internal debate: Quit boxing and either get a nine-to-five job or attend college while Zab was working his way toward winning the IBF junior welterweight title, or continue with the dream of becoming a world champion boxer himself.

So despite their common, distinctive Judah sound, Daniel and Zab have travelled diverse paths in their quest for boxing stardom. While Zab has seemingly glided his way to the top, Daniel, a rangy 6'2" southpaw, is just starting to take his first steps toward hopefully winning a world title.

"It was hard," admitted Daniel, 23. "Because I have the same blood as Zab, I used to think, *Why wasn't I doing the same things as him?* But I was never jealous of Zab, because it's in the family. They don't make people like me anymore, because I'll walk through a wall to get what I want. Zab took the short road, I have to take the long road. I don't

(Continued on page 92)



Runners Advantage™ Creatine Serum™

FINALLY, YOU CAN USE CREATINE to improve your training. New Runners Advantage™ Creatine Serum™ is a safe, effective and stable liquid creatine supplement. It's formulated specifically for all endurance training, including running, cycling and boxing.

Runners Advantage delays fatigue by combating lactic acid buildup. It will aid in building muscle to improve sprint times and increasing your long distance endurance. But it won't add bulk to your body.

Traditional creatine powders cause water retention, dehydration and bloating. These are three side effects no endurance athlete needs. However, Creatine Serum is a stable liquid, so it's absorbed directly into your bloodstream and from there into your muscles. That means you can finally take full advantage of creatine's energy boosting properties.

Male Female

Runners Advantage also contains other important ingredients such as magnesium, glucosamine, l-glutamine and l-taurine to help maximize your performance and protect your joints from stress-related injuries. Now available in both male and female formulations and many delicious flavors, it will also aid athletes in sports activities such as swimming, tennis and soccer.

Just take 5ml once, a few minutes before exercise. You'll go harder. And further.

SERUM vs POWDER

Does not cause water retention, bloating or cramping	Causes water retention resulting in dehydration, bloating and cramping
Stay with your normal water intake	Must consume extra water to counteract dehydration
Convenient and easy-to-use	Inconvenient and time-consuming
Instant absorption	Takes one hour or more to digest
Completely assimilated into the muscles in minutes	Up to 80% wasted during the digestion process
100% stable: 2-year shelf life	Unstable: rapidly degrades into waste product creatinine
No loading: take just minutes before exercise	Loading required: must be taken in large amounts for 5 days prior to exercise
No maintenance: take only on training days	Daily maintenance: must be taken even on non-training days
Delicious flavors	Chalky, unpleasant taste

MMUSA MUSCLE MARKETING USA

Achieve Results. Safely.™

Call to order: **1-877-737-8675** for 24-hour service and 3-5 day delivery. Retailers and technical information call toll-free: 1-877-MUSCLES (687-2537), 8am–4pm PST. Available at GNC LiveWell. The Vitamin Shoppe VITAMIN WORLD Bally TOTAL FITNESS MUSCLEMAG and other selected health food stores and gyms. For scientific references or to order online: **www.creatine.com**

RYAN OUT LOUD

By Jeff Ryan

TEMPERED STEELE

Don't count me among those folks who consider it noble to squeeze every last drop out of a career, to hang on until the whispers about your decline turn into shouts and the coach or supervisor or chief of staff has to use both hands to shove you toward the door. To me, there's something special about a guy who walks away from the job he excels at when he's still near the top of his game. Especially these days, when athletes don't pack it in until their stats are in free fall, rock groups embark on semiannual "farewell" tours, and everyone from your sexagenarian doctor to your septuagenarian shoemaker has shown you that he just can't do the job as well as he once did.

With that in mind, you'd probably expect me to be cheering the retirement of referee Richard Steele. Part of me surely is, because Steele's career ends on his terms and with the future Hall of Famer holding his bald head high following a good job in his final bout, Floyd Mayweather's blitzing of Diego Corrales. But a large part of me isn't applauding because, no matter what circumstances or emotions surround a decision like the one the 57-year-old Steele made, there's no such thing as a good time for the Sweet Science to lose its best referee. And make no mistake about it, Steele was its best.

Steele's retirement is the soporific bomb to the chin that caps off a devastating three-punch combination. It was preceded by a pop in the nose (the tough and fearless Mills Lane leaving the ring for his own television show and a new role as a fight promoter) and a haymaker to the gut (Mitch Halpern, the best of the next generation of third men in the ring, committing suicide). The immediate reaction is to declare that boxing in Nevada, where all three men lived and did most of their work, has taken an enormous hit. It's more accurate, though, to say that the entire sport has been clobbered.

Safety-conscious Steele rescues Ratanapol Vorapin

Of the three, it's Steele who will be missed the most, not by the fans or media, but by the people who are most important to this business: the fighters. "People either loved him or hated him," said middleweight king Bernard Hopkins, "and he got bad press for his decision to stop some fights when he did. But he had a lot more good fights than bad ones. And among boxers, he had a lot of respect."

Steele told me that he had been thinking "for a couple of months" about retiring, but that he made the decision, strangely enough, during the sixth round of Mayweather-Corrales.

"It came to me then," said Steele. "Mayweather was putting on a great display of boxing, the match was clean, and it seemed like a perfect fight for a ref to go out on. I wasn't going to wait around for another perfect time."

Soon after Mayweather had dispatched Corrales, Steele and the timekeepers, judges, inspectors, and other referees from that night's card met backstage with Marc Ratner, the executive director of the Nevada State Athletic Commission, for a job-performance review. After listening to Ratner tell him how outstanding his work had been during the main event, Steele calmly revealed his intentions.

"I was the most surprised guy in the building," said Ratner. "All officials want to go out on top. I'm a Division I college football linesman [in the Mountain West Conference], so I understand that thinking well. Richard wants to train fighters and turn people into champions and, financially, maybe that's the way to go. But he could have kept refereeing at the same level of performance for another five years."

PHOTO BY TEDDY BLACKBURN

Steele and his wife, Gladys, will train and manage fighters

The strange timing of Steele's bombshell announcement created speculation that there were hidden reasons behind his sudden departure. Though he was jolted by the suicide of Halpern, a talent he had mentored, Steele said the grief he feels over that tragedy wasn't a factor. And he denied that he had been driven out by boxing's politics, the most recent example of which was the Corrales camp objecting to Steele's appointment because Mayweather once trained in the gym the ref owns.

"I just felt that 30 years is a long time to do something, and a guy should have his fulfillment after that long," said Steele. "In my profession, you can't be filled with ego. You have to think of protecting a human's life, and you start to think about your reflexes slowing down. I wanted to get out before that happened. As far as politics go, I've been dealing with that for 30 years, so it was nothing new."

Proof that he has a thick skin, Steele told me, was his having to cope with being booed nearly every time he was introduced for the past 10 years. The jeers started, of course, after Steele waved off Julio Cesar Chavez-Meldrick Taylor I in 1990 with two seconds to go in the final round (a bad call), then reached even greater intensity when Steele halted Mike Tyson-Razor Ruddock I the following year after Ruddock staggered into the ropes in round seven (a good call). Unfortunately, the mental midgets never cut Steele a break after that, and their idiotic booing became as much a Las Vegas tradition as Wayne Newton concerts and 99-cent shrimp cocktails.

"People who didn't even remember why I was being booed just picked it up because others were doing it," said Steele. "All I know is that Taylor was one of the top fighters in the game and that fight ruined him. So I know he had taken punishment and I know I was justified. And I stopped Ruddock from taking a final punch he didn't need to take when he had one of his hands at his knees."

Unfortunately, those two controversial stoppages overshadowed Steele at his best and made people forget what made him so good. As a former pro fighter (16-4 as a light heavyweight), he knew all the nuances of the game. He was physically strong and courageous. (One can't forget how he briefly halted the Marvin Hagler-Tommy Hearns war to have the ringside doctor check Hagler's cut, all the while knowing that the crowd would have turned the makeshift stadium at Caesars Palace into a pile of toothpicks if the bout was stopped.) Steele was as much of a commanding presence as Arthur Mercante Sr. And he was as no-nonsense as Lane, just without Judge Mills' penchant for grandstanding.

"It's the hardest officiating job in sports," said Ratner. "Richard did it without ever getting flustered, and fighters listened to him because he was one of them."

Said Steele, "Fans, writers, and TV commentators can make or break you, but I always did what I thought was right. Safety was my pet peeve. I wanted to make sure those young men had a chance to box another day. Boos and bad writeups didn't matter to me as long as no one got hurt."

A note to the plaque engravers in Canastota: Steele never presided over a death in the ring, nor did any fighter expire from injuries suffered in a bout Steele worked. That is no small statement.

Now that he has hung up his bow tie, Steele will spend his time training fighters at his Nevada Partners Boxing Gym and managing a few of them with his wife, Gladys. And Ratner, not surprisingly, intends to have him assisting in the development of new referees. Yes, Steele will be heard from again, but the voice will no longer be giving instructions in the dressing rooms, ordering a break, or counting over a downed warrior. *That* Richard Steele will live on only in some of the great fight films.

Now, there's something you should boo. ■

DIGGING DEEP

By Ivan Goldman

ABOVE AVERAGE FOOD, BELOW AVERAGE MAYWEATHER

It's instructive to disregard for a moment the actual match between welters Oscar De La Hoya and Arturo Gatti and consider the press conference that kicked off their publicity blitz. Promoters, who know media guys are on a perennial search for free food, figure correctly that such events are a great way to make an initial splash.

Both fighters have dedicated followers, but this particular bout, with the super-fast De La Hoya going off as a 100-1 favorite over the super-slow Gatti, was in strong need of a boost. And I must say the proceedings, set in Los Angeles, scored well above average.

First, the brunch was terrific, especially the smoked salmon. Too bad I couldn't devote more time to it. But the hotel, just down the street from former President Reagan's offices, was charging me $8 an hour for parking. So who had time to chew?

Second, it's clear that the time Oscar spent in Hollywood away from boxing so he could record and plug his first music CD was well spent. I am happy to report that his grooming, which was always impeccable, has reached an even higher level. And he got himself a new hairdo.

PHOTO BY FRANK VITUCCI

Mayweather and microphones can be a volatile mixture

Third, and perhaps most important, we were able to gain new perspective in the on-again, off-again feud between junior lightweight champ "Pretty Boy" Floyd Mayweather and his father, Floyd Sr. The elder Mayweather was there as the most recent in a long line of Oscar's trainers that he cherishes like his own father until he fires them.

Watching foot-in-mouth Floyd Sr. in live action up on the podium, I realized we were all way too hasty when we criticized his kid for throwing the old man out of the house and taking away his car. Because if things like that have to happen, they couldn't happen to a more appropriate person than Floyd Sr.

After everyone from the Gatti team took turns complimenting the skills of Oscar and his new trainer, Mayweather rose and launched a babbling, purposeless assault against Gatti that ridiculed his talents and accomplishments.

"After Oscar gets through with you, I'll beat you myself for free," ex-fighter Mayweather said. Repeatedly. "You can't hit me. You're too slow."

This, of course, was exactly opposite the propaganda message of the fight's promoters, who wanted everyone to believe that Gatti was a credible oppo-

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Madman Mayweather claimed he could beat Gatti (pictured vs. Joey Gamache)

nent. But evidently no one explained this to Floyd. Big mistake. If ever there was a man who required special handling, Mayweather is that guy.

All this brought to mind an earlier press conference preceding the younger Mayweather's successful title challenge against Genaro "Chicanito" Hernandez. That's when Dad grabbed the microphone and belittled Hernandez as an impossibly untalented foe. At the time, Hernandez had successfully defended his titles more than twice as many times as the number of years (four) that Floyd Sr. spent in a Michigan penitentiary for selling dope.

"You've got no class," Gatti explained to De La Hoya 's new trainer. But I doubt he understood what Gatti was talking about.

It may be worth noting that deep cuts opened over both of Gatti's eyes when Oscar glanced at him across the podium. But they didn't swell too badly, and thankfully the physicians in attendance let Gatti go the press conference distance.

What was truly remarkable about these well-tooled proceedings was the fact that the fighters had a casino to fight in, a publicity machine in full gear, and their purses all arranged. Yet at the time they still didn't know which network would be televising the card. This was due to legal hassles between HBO and De La Hoya. De La Hoya, who figures he's never signed a contract he couldn't wriggle out of, was playing cute with his HBO commitments, although he eventually came to an agreement with the cable giant for the Gatti fight.

Oscar's new promoter, the mysterious, rarely photographed, and extremely rich Jerry Perenchio, who also happens to own his own TV network—Univision—was nowhere to be seen. His presence hung over the proceedings like a giant, fluffy cloud of net assets.

It's unlikely that even Oscar would try to renegotiate a contract with media powerhouse AOL-Time Warner, which owns HBO, if he didn't have a Perenchio to back him up.

BILL, YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE: Not long before departing President Bill Clinton pardoned the fugitive from justice and accused traitor and tax cheat Mark Rich, Clinton bestowed the Presidential Citizens Medal on Muhammad Ali. In a way, of course, it's fitting that Clinton, who practically chopped off a couple of toes to stay out of the military, would bestow a medal on Ali, who went to equal lengths not to serve.

What Ali accomplished in the ring represents the finest part of boxing. His illness and its probable cause represent the worst. I have no quarrel with honoring him. I applaud it.

But not with a medal. Not to a man who hired a squad of lawyers to arrange it so he could stay out of the military and let someone else serve in his place. Decorating Ali insulted everyone who went to Vietnam, particularly those who never came back or left pieces of themselves over there.

During the award ceremony, Clinton singled out Ali for allegedly breaking down racial barriers and striving for equal opportunity. Tell that to Joe Frazier, the man Ali used to call a gorilla. Or what about the deceased Sonny Liston? Ali taunted him as an ugly bear.

If Ali really sought to break down racial barriers, then why did he belittle black men for being black men who dared to oppose him? He unilaterally decided that he represented African-Americans and arch-opponent Frazier the white establishment. There was never any logic to this simplistic categorization. But it dogged Frazier, unfairly, for many years.

Listen, I know Ali is terribly sick, and yes, it pains me to see it. But he's still responsible for his deeds. Sure, he was the finest heavyweight most of us will ever see—and a man of tremendous physical courage. But as a humanitarian, Ali scored low. And as a medal recipient, he was a poor choice. ■

PHOTO BY TEDDY BLACKBURN

From honorary degrees to Presidential medals, Ali gets exalted regularly

BEING THERE

IBHOF INDUCTION WEEKEND

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO

IBHOF Director Ed Brophy at the museum grounds

An aerial view of the IBHOF during induction weekend

PHOTO BY PAT ORR

By Nigel Collins

For boxing fans, there's no better place to spend the second weekend of June than at the International Boxing Hall of Fame Induction Weekend in Canastota, New York. Every summer since 1990, lovers of the Sweet Science have trekked to this charming village in upstate New York to pay homage to their boxing heroes during a four-day festival that culminates with the induction of new members.

This year's inductees include Ultimino "Sugar" Ramos, Randy Turpin, Laszlo Papp, Ismael Laguna, and Willie Pastrano in the Modern category; Paul Berlenbach, Jim Braddock, Billy Papke, and Midget Wolgast in the Old-Timers group; Barney Aaron in the Pioneer category; George Benton, Don Chargin, and Sam Ichinose in the Non-Participant section; and Lester Bromberg, Ralph Citro, and Bill Gallo in the newly created Observer category. All seven living inductees—Laguna, Papp, Ramos, Benton, Chargin, Citro, and Gallo—are expected to attend.

The boxers on hand for the weekend are not restricted to those being honored this year. Hall of Fame alumni and active fighters are also a big part of the scene, and Aaron Pryor, Gene Fullmer, Alexis Arguello, Kid Gavilan, Emile Griffith, Bob Foster, Floyd Patterson, Joey Maxim, Ken Buchanan, Iran Barkley, and Earnie Shavers are just a few of this year's special guests.

There's never a dull moment during the weekend, which kicks off around 1 p.m. on Thursday, June 7, and continues until approximately 3:30 p.m. on Sunday, June 10. Besides visiting the Hall of Fame museum and seeing the many exhibits on display, there are numerous other activities, including celebrity workouts, lectures, a cookout, a golf tournament, a 5K race, fist casting, an autograph card show, a VIP cocktail reception, the banquet of champions, the parade of champions (a decidedly surreal event), and, of course, the enshrinement ceremony. There is also a professional boxing card held on Friday night at the nearby Turning Stone Casino.

Some of the events, such as the banquet ($125) and golf tournament ($85), are expensive, but other activities such as the lectures, workouts, parade, and induction ceremony are free. Autograph-seekers will find most of the fighters very accommodating, but professional memorabilia dealers, especially those who try to take advantage of the situation by asking fighters to sign dozens of items, are frowned upon.

Of course, the highlight of the IBHOF induction weekend are the fighters themselves, many of whom, despite their accomplishments, are virtually forgotten by most of the world. But they're not forgotten in Canastota, where for one weekend every year they are champions again. To see the looks on these old warriors' faces when they hear the cheers of the crowd, in some cases for the first time in decades, is truly a heartwarming experience and worth the trip in and of itself. ■

IF YOU GO

Location: 1 Hall of Fame Drive, Canastota, NY 13032; phone: 315-697-7095; fax: 315-697-5356; Web address: www.IBHOF.com

Directions: By car, take the New York State Thruway to exit 34. The nearest international airport is in Syracuse, New York, approximately 20 minutes from Canastota by car.

Accommodations: Madison County Tourism has a listing of hotels, bed & breakfasts, and campsites in the Canastota area, and can be reached at 800-684-7320.

Tickets: Tickets for all events, including the pro boxing show at the Turning Stone Casino, are available by contacting the IBHOF.

Who to look out for: Besides the numerous fighters, fans will also be able to chat with trainers, managers, cutmen, journalists, historians, and collectors. Most celebrities are also happy to pose for photographs. Best of all, you'll have something in common with every person there—a love of boxing.

Advice to greenhorns: The bar and restaurant at Graciano's Motel Lodge, located directly across the street from the Hall of Fame grounds, is unofficial party headquarters. Locals, tourists, and fight people all mingle in this noisy, smoke-filled tavern, where legends of the game rub shoulders with their fans, and fight talk fills the air into the wee hours of the morning.

PHOTO BY PAT ORR

Some of the items on display inside the museum

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/DIRECTV

Inductees Matthew Saad Muhammad, Jeff Chandler, Gene Fullmer, Mickey Duff, and Kid Gavilan pose at the 2000 Banquet of Champions

PHOTO BY PAT ORR

Ruben Olivares proudly points to his plaque

PHOTO BY PAT ORR

Canastota's own Carmen Basilio mans the grill

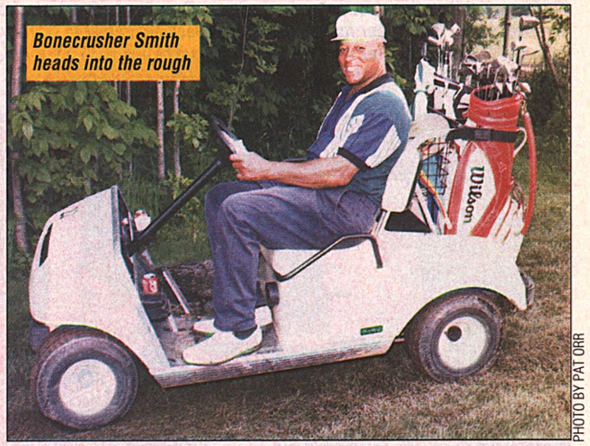


PHOTO BY PAT ORR

CAMERA CLICKS

PHOTO BY RAY BAILEY

"And Debind Thapa has the lead heading into the final turn ... " There's running, and then there's running, as junior bantam Thapa demonstrated en route to his first career loss, a unanimous decision defeat to journeyman Oscar Andrade. After seeing this photo, maybe we were all a little hard on Oscar De La Hoya for the way he fought Felix Trinidad.

PHOTO BY SUMIO YAMADA

Prince Naseem Hamed turned 27 on the day the press tour for his fight with Marco Antonio Barrera began, and he celebrated by blowing out the candles on his birthday cake. If Naz ever actually fights on his birthday, you can bet he'll make his grand entrance by climbing out of a giant cake, but instead of candles, it will likely be his opponent getting blown out.

PHOTO BY MIKE GREENHILL

ESPN2's Teddy Atlas almost looks like a father scolding a kid for playing with his food, which is more or less what Aaron Davis did when he made a mess of Vinny Paz' face and kept methodically chopping him up until the fight was stopped in the eighth round. No word on whether Teddy sent Davis straight to bed without dessert.

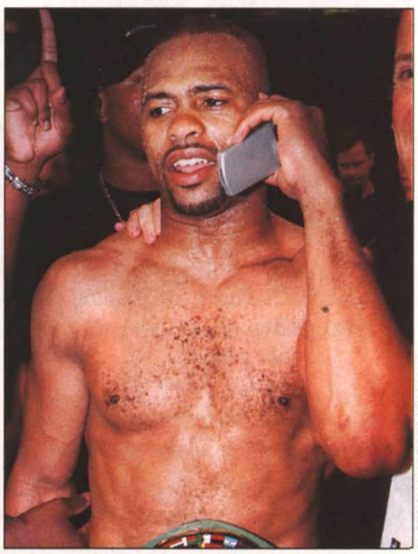


PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Roy Jones got a surprise phone call from President Bush to congratulate him on his successful defense of the light heavyweight title against Derrick Harmon in Tampa. "If I'd been up against an opponent that mediocre, I'd have gotten an easy win in Florida too," George W. joked.

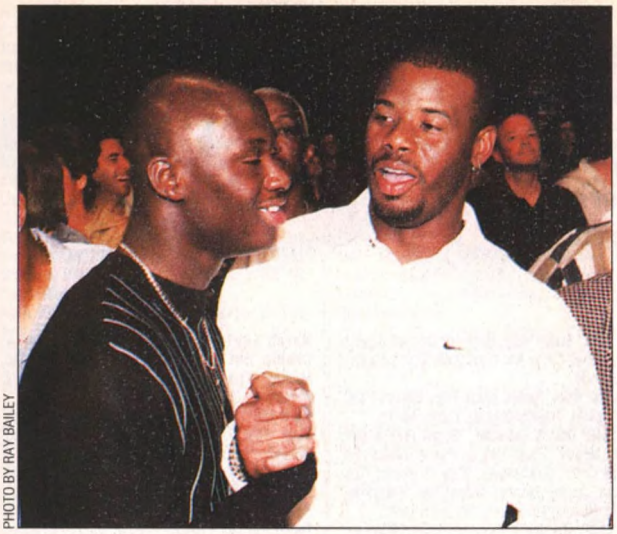


PHOTO BY RAY BAILEY

We're not sure who was the bigger disappointment: Antonio Tarver in his fight last summer against Eric Harding, or Ken Griffey Jr. in his first season with the Cincinnati Reds. Actually, after seeing the Harding-Tarver fight, Griffey was rumored to have offered "The Magic Man" a position on the Reds as a catcher.

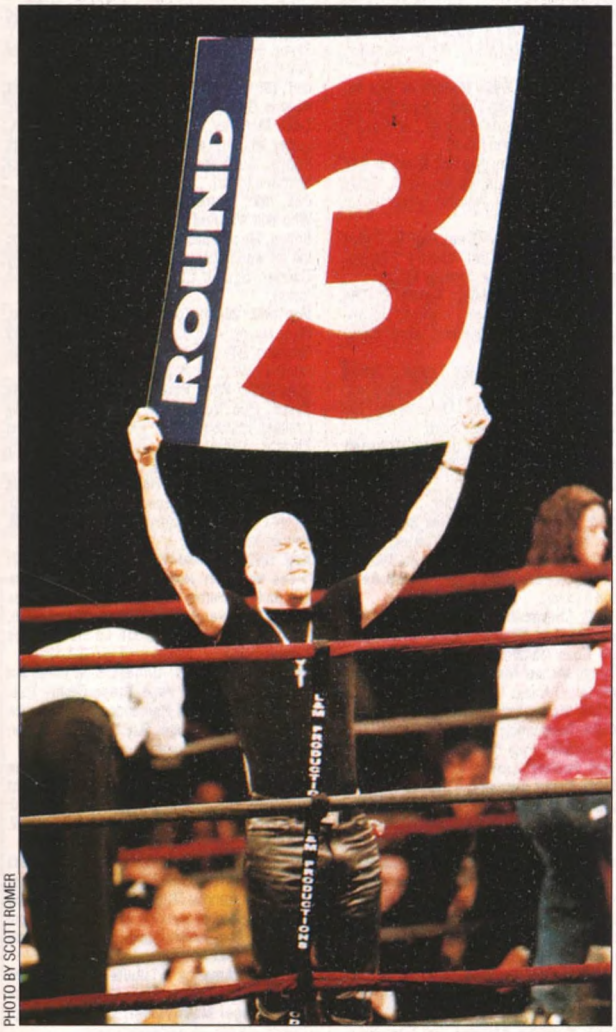


PHOTO BY SCOTT ROMER

If this is what the round-card girls look like in Columbus, Ohio, something tells us the fans are going to be rooting for a lot of first-round knockouts. On the Julio Gonzalez-Julian Letterlough card in February, lightweight contender Angel Manfredy stepped in and strutted his stuff. At least he wasn't wearing a string bikini.

PHOTO BY RAY BAILEY

Zab Judah didn't exactly endear himself to the boxing world with his recent comment about not caring what the fans think, but as Larry Holmes might have been telling him as this photo was taken, maybe if he's lucky the fans will start to root for him when he's in his 40s. Judah met up with "The Easton Assassin" at a February fight card in Atlantic City.

NOSTALGIA CORNER

A face only a wife could love: Ron Stander, moments after getting stitched up following his fifth-round TKO loss to Joe Frazier in a challenge for the heavyweight title, gets a kiss from spouse Darlene. It's safe to say Stander preferred his wife gently planting one on his face to Frazier's not-so-gentle touch.

Back Issues of

Add to your RING collection by ordering from our limited supply of back issues. Single issues are $5 each. Order by the year and save up to 30%. Listed prices include postage and handling. Supplies are limited. To assure fulfillment order today.

March 1982 (100-Page Special): Sanchez & Leonard: Fighters Of The Year. Plus: Year-end awrds, Chandler gatefold, 1981 in review, boxing calendar, powers-that-be.

Feb. 1983: Michael Dokes: Tainted Champion? Plus: Howard Cosell, Ray Mancini, Bum of the Month Club, Chacon-Limon.

May 1983: Michael Spinks Wins It All. Plus: Spinks-Braxton color, Bob Arum, Marvin Hagler, Collins-LaPaglia.

June 1983: What Now For Ray Mancini? Plus: Lupe Pintor, Paddy Flood, Bonecrusher Smith, Charlie Brown, Frazier-Broad, Chang-Zapata, Holmes-Teofilo Stevenson, Tony Ayala, Jersey Joe Walcott.

Aug. 1983: Roberto Duran: One "Mas" Time. Plus: Larry Holmes, Colin Jones, Jimmy Montoya, Alexis Arguello, Billy Petrolle, Duran-Moore, Frazier-Bugner, Resto-Collins, Escalera-Hatcher.

Nov. 1983: Gerrie Coetzee: The New Heavyweight Champ Sets His Sights On Holmes. Plus: Alexis Arguello, Murray Sutherland, James J. Braddock, Muhammad Ali.

Feb. 1984: Don King Talks And Talks And Talks. Plus: Leonard's return, Eddie Mustafa Muhammad, 1983 quotes, Marvin Hagler, Johnny Bratton, Gerald Hayes, Hagler-Duran color.

June 1984: Bumphus, Lockridge, Duva: 'That Championship Year.' Plus: Ferdie Pacheco, Harry Arroyo,.Holmes-Coetzee preview, Pipino Cuevas, Aaron Pryor, Battling Nelson-Joe Gans, Witherspoon-Page.

July 1984: Bazooka's Aim Is True: Gomez Shoots Down LaPorte In The Battle For San Juan. Plus: Michael Spinks, Vinny Pazienza, Tyrone Crawley, Leonard's comeback, Chandler-Sandoval, Hagler-Roldan.

Aug. 1984: Olympic Special: Mark Breland Leads A Strong Squad. Plus: Leonard-Howard, Davila-Sanchez, Bonecrusher-Bruno, Bramble-Mancini, Hatcher-Bumphus, Garza-Orozco.

Oct. 1984: The Beast From The East: John Mugabi Strikes Terror Into The Hearts Of Men. Plus: Olympics, Bill Costello, Davey Moore, Wilfred Benitez, King's heavyweights.

Jan. 1985: Holmes-Bonecrusher Color Action. Plus: Gerry Cooney, pro debuts (Breland, Hill, Taylor, Biggs, Whitaker, Holyfield), Santos-Medal, Meza-Garza.

Feb. 1985: Showdown: Page Clobbers Coetzee For WBA Title. Plus: Larry Holmes, lightweights, Cooney-Chaplin, McCallum-Minchillo.

April 1985: Special Hagler-Hearns Program. Plus: British fighters, Hector Camacho, Donald Curry, Sonny Liston.

May 1985: The Rematch In Reno: Bramble-Mancini Color Action. Plus: Donald Curry, Aaron Pryor, McGuigan-LaPorte.

June 1985: Holmes' Last Hurrah? Holmes-Bey Color Action. Plus: Holmes vs. all-time greats, Paul-Arroyo, 1901.

Aug. 1985: Seven Elected To The Ring Hall Of Fame (Jose Napoles, Jake LaMotta, Panama Al Brown, Manuel Ortiz, Young Stribling, Thomas Jackling, Lord Lonsdale). Plus: Spinks-Holmes preview, Barry McGuigan.

Sept. 1985: Barry McGuigan: Can He Be Boxing's Savior? Plus: Truth Williams, Tyrell Biggs, Greg Richardson, Julio Cesar Chavez, Paul-Blake, Witherspoon-Bonecrusher, Berbick-Bey, Pinklon Thomas.

Oct. 1985: The "Macho Man" Rides Again. Plus: Jeff Fenech, Berbick-Green, John E. Garcia, Dwight Muhammad Qawi, McCallum-Braxton.

Nov. 1985: Will Hagler Feast On The Beast? Plus: Hagler-Mugabi & Hearns-Shuler previews, Lonnie Smith, Pintor-Meza, Chuck Hull, Benitez-Moley.

Dec. 1985: Michael Spinks: Against All Odds. Plus: Curry-McCrory preview, McGuigan-Taylor, Alexis Arguello, Michael Olajide, Chavez-Pratchett.

Jan. 1986: In Search Of A Heavyweight Champion. Plus: Azumah Nelson, Arguello-Jefferson, Olympic update, Chicago boxing.

March 1986 (Awards Issue): Co-Fighters Of The Year: Marvelous Marvin Hagler & Donald Curry. Plus: Ring's Annual Awards, Evander Holyfield, Williamson-Muhammad, Camacho-Roach, 1985 boxing diary.

April 1986: Witherspoon Tames Tubbs For WBA Title. Plus: Dream fights, Greg Haugen, Tyrell Biggs, Mark Breland, Paul Gonzales, HBO tourney, Witherspoon-Tubbs, Frank Warren, Gene Tunney.

May 1986: Marvelous Marvin Tames The Beast. Plus: Hearns-Shuler, Mike Tyson, Bramble-Crawley, Sandoval-Canizales, Marvin Johnson, McGuigan-Cabrera, Arguello-Costello, Weaver-Williams.

June 1986: Barry's Back In The USA: McGuigan Breathes A Breath Of Fresh Air into American Fight Scene. Plus: Bobby Czyz, Robbie Sims, Qawi-Holyfield preview, Berbick-Thomas, Bruno-Coetzee.

July 1986: Spinks-Holmes II: Who Really Won? Plus: Frank Bruno, Richie Sandoval, Kevin Watts, Tyson-Tillis, Boza-Edwards-Alli, Johnson-Burns.

Aug. 1986: Is Sugar Ray Still Sweet? Plus: Lloyd Honeyghan, Tyson-Green, Cooney-Gregg, Hall of Fame (Eder Jofre, Benny Lynch, Bud Taylor, Sam McVey, Nat Langham, John Chambers), Bernardo Pinango.

Sept. 1986: Gerry Cooney vs. Mike Tyson: Who Would Win? Plus: Cruz-McGuigan, Hearns-Medal, Tyson-Gross, Sims-Duran.

Dec. 1986: The Weekend That Shook The Boxing World. Rosario-Bramble & Honeyghan-Curry. Plus: Butch Lewis interview, Buster Drayton, Hector Camacho, Jake LaMotta.

April 1987: Hagler-Leonard Souvenir Issue. Plus: Czyz, Orlando Canizales, Mugabi-Thomas, Biggs-Snipes, Chavez-LaPorte, Bonecrusher-Witherspoon II, Haugen-Paul.

May 1987: Mike Tyson: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Year-end awards, *The Ring* annual ratings, Louie Espinoza, Herol Graham.

June 1987: Vinny Paz: Phenom Or Phony? Plus: Tyson-Bonecrusher, Mark Breland, Brian Mitchell, Holyfield, Czyz-Edwards, Olajide-Lee, Curry-Montgomery.

July 1987: Spinks-Cooney: The Fight That Refused To Die. Plus: The new *Ring* ratings, Terry Marsh, George Foreman's return, Khaosai Galaxy, Hearns-Andries, Whitaker-Mayweather.

Aug. 1987: Sugar Ray: Still In Style. Plus: Leonard-Hagler, all-time heavyweight ratings, Czyz-MacDonald, Camacho-Davis.

Sept. 1987: Michael Olajide: The Look Of The Future? Plus: Tyson-Thomas, Jeff Fenech, middleweight muddle, Tsuyoshi Hamada, Juan Roldan, Harold Knight.

Nov. 1987: Tyson Wins Heavyweight Triple Crown. Plus: McCallum-Curry, Carlos Monzon interview, triple champions, Orlin & Terry Norris, Ramirez-Alli, Fenech-Richardson, Matthew Hilton.

Dec. 1987: Spinks & Lewis: Boxing's Beastie Boys. Plus: Starling-Breland, Ramzi Hassan, Honeyghan-Hatcher, Holyfield-Ocasio.

Jan. 1988: Darrin Van Horn-Million Dollar Baby? Plus: Evander Holyfield, Hill-Stewart, Juan Coggi, great hookers, AIDS.

Feb. 1988: Gold Outshines Glitter: Tate Tops Olajide. Plus: Tyson-Biggs, Kalambay-Barkley, Hearns-Roldan, fights we'd like to see.

April 1988: Evander Holyfield: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Special year-end awards, Holyfield-Qawi II, Foreman-Sekorski, Hill-Angulo.

May 1988: George Foreman: "I Can Beat Tyson." Plus: Tyson-Holmes, Jesse Benavides, Showtime, no-knockout artists.

Aug. 1988: Julio Cesar Chavez: The Kid From Culiacan. Plus: Holyfield, bad decisions, Lockridge-Knight, Starling-Breland II, Brown-Trice, Haugen-Santana.

Sept. 1988: Sugar Ray: Here He Comes Again! Plus: Andries-Czyz, Kid Chocolate, Don Dunphy, Don Lalonde.

Oct. 1988: Mike Tyson: What Price Glory? Plus: Tyson-Spinks, Hearns-Barkley, Davey Moore.

Nov. 1988: Donny Lalonde: "Sugar Ray is Out Of His Mind!" Plus: Hall of Fame selections (Carlos Ortiz, Joe Brown, Billy Graham, Cus D'Amato, Jimmy Jacobs), Nunn-Tate, Molinares-Starling, Honeyghan-Chung, '88 Olympians.

Jan. 1989: Meldrick Taylor: Philly Phenom. Plus: Marvin Hagler, Alex Wallau, Taylor-McGirt, Olympic results.

Feb. 1989: Julio Cesar Chavez. Plus: Chavez-Ramirez, all-time lightweight ratings, Louie Espinoza, Simon Brown, Roger Mayweather.

March 1989: Hearns Next For Sugar Ray? Plus: Leonard-Lalonde, Prince Charles Williams, Hearns-Kinchen, Nunn-Roldan, Hines-Hilton.

May 1989: The Best Of '88. Plus: Year-end awards, Evander Holyfield, Pryor-Morales, Fenech-Navarro.

Jan. 1990: Boxing's Bible Reborn At Age 68. Plus: Carlos Monzon, Mike Tyson, Leonard-Duran, Daniel Zaragoza, Nunn-Barkley, Whitaker-Ramirez, George Foreman (color).

Feb. 1990: Mike Tyson: Riddick Bowe & Ray Mercer Take Aim. Plus: Bobby Czyz, Gerry Cooney, Chuck Wepner, Antonio Esparragoza, Roman-Laciar.

March 1990: The '80s—Great Fights, Great Fighters (color). Plus: Jeff Harding, Evander Holyfield, Pete Rademacher, Sharkey-McCoy.

April 1990: Pernell Whitaker: Fighter Of The Year (color). Plus: Tiger Flowers, Duran-Leonard, Chavez-Taylor preview, Jorge Paez, Ali-Cooper.

May 1990: Big George Talks Tough: "Tyson Won't Be That Difficult!" Plus: Ed Hopson, Russian fighters, grudge wars, Archie Moore, Kid Berg, Marcel Cerdan, Chavez-Cortes.

June 1990: Buster! How James Douglas Shocked The World. Plus: Michael Moorer, Camacho-Paez, Tommy Farr, Excuses, Dick Tiger, Ruben Olivares-Jeff Chandler.

July 1990: "I'm Hungrier Than Ever Before," By Evander Holyfield. Plus: James Toney, Buddy McGirt, Glenwood Brown, Aaron Davis, Michael Carbajal, Jorge Paez, Kid Gavilan, Mark Breland, Ali-Liston II (color).

Aug. 1990: Chavez: His Greatness Confirmed ... Is He The Best Mexican Fighter Ever? Plus: Matthew Saad Muhammad, John L. Sullivan & Mike Tyson, Michael Nunn, Mark Breland, Harold Johnson, Cus D'Amato, Louis-Godoy (color).

Sept. 1990: Marvin Hagler-Can He Resist The Irresistible Temptation? Plus: Thomas Hearns, Sanchez-Saddler, Paul Banke, puncher vs. chin, Beau Jack, Robinson-LaMotta (color).

Oct. 1990: Rocky Graziano—Thanks For The Memories. Plus: Aaron Pryor, Junior Jones, Mike Tyson, Chris Eubank, Wolgast-Nelson, Hall of Fame.

Nov. 1990: Tyson vs. Foreman. Can Iron Mike Stop The Blast From The Past? Plus: Bruce Seldon, best chins, Sullivan-Kilrain (color), Azumah Nelson, LaStarza.

Dec. 1990: Exclusive Annual Report: The State Of The Game. Plus: Douglas-Holyfield preview, Julio Cesar Chavez, Joe Grim, Whitaker-Nazario, Rosi-Van Horn, Benny Leonard, Douglas-Tyson (color).

Jan. 1991: Boxing's Baddest Bad Boy: Nigel Benn Plays By His Own Rules. Plus: Roberto Duran, Kid Akeem, Jose Napoles, Jimmy Carruthers, LaMotta-Zale, Dempsey-Willard (color).

Feb. 1991: Boxing On TV—Now You'll Pay! Plus: Ismael Laguna, Tommy Morrison in *Rocky V*, Reggie Tuur, Chiquita Gonzalez, Harold Green, Joe Louis.

March 1991: Hunger! It Made Evander A Champ, But ... Plus: Dempsey-Firpo, Charles Murray, Khaosai Galaxy, Nunn-Curry, Henry Armstrong, Sonny Liston (color).

April 1991: Julio Cesar Chavez—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Tyson-Stewart, James Leija, Wilfred Benitez, Pedro Decima, Moore-Bassey.

June 1991: Pain, Frustration, Confidence, And Hope: Meldrick Taylor's Life After Chavez. Plus: Foreman-Holyfield preview, Norris-Leonard, David Kamau, Freddie Steele, Bennie Briscoe, Leonard's career (color).

July 1991: Tyson's Title Hopes: He Ain't What He Used To Be...But It's Not Gonna Matter. Plus: Eusebio Pedroza, Myung Woo Yuh, Willie Meehan, Hearns-Hill preview, computer junior welterweight tournament, Gomez-Fenech, controversial heavyweight finishes (color).

Aug. 1991: Foreman Gives Holyfield A Fight ... And The World A Thrill (color). Plus: Making weight, Harry Greb, Kevin Kelley, Louis-Conn I, Simon Brown-Blocker, Chavez-Duplessis, Sugar Ray Robinson.

Oct. 1991: A Hit Again-How Far Can Thomas Hearns Go? Plus: Battling Levinsky, Oba Carr, Dave McAuley, Muhammad Ali, Lou Ambers, Luther McCarty, ethnic matchups, computer light heavy tournament, Cerdan-Hagler, Rocky Marciano (color).

Dec. 1991: Evander Holyfield vs. Mike Tyson: Who Will Win And Why. Plus: Eddie Aliano, Jack Britton, Muhammad Ali, Pernell Whitaker, rating the 44 world champions, Marcel Cerdan, Henry Cooper, Ezzard Charles-Jersey Joe Walcott (color).

May 1992: James Toney—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Myung Woo Yuh, Khaosai Galaxy, Rocky Graziano, Billy Soose, Roy Jones, James Warring, Duran-Chavez, Marvin Hagler (color).

June 1992: What Now? Boxing Without Mike Tyson. Plus: Buck Smith, Liston-Foreman, Billy Graham, Holmes-Mercer, Enrique Pinder, Hilario Zapata, Toney-Tiberi, Benny Lynch, Tony DeMarco, Tyson centerfold (color).

July 1992: Does Larry Holmes Deserve A Title Shot? Plus: Nelson-Fenech II, Tracy Patterson, Kelley-Dorsey, fat fighters, Buchanan-Camacho, Holmes-Ali (color).

Aug. 1992: Holyfield-Holmes Prefight. Holmes: "I See Me Takin' Holyfield Outta There." Plus: Iran Barkley, Herbie Hide, George Foreman, Tex Cobb, Carnival of Champions, Harry Greb, Haugen-Mancini, Oscar De La Hoya, Gene Tunney (color).

Sept. 1992: Chavez: Unbeaten At 80-0, But What If He Had To Face These Guys? Plus: Bobby Czyz, Genaro Hernandez, Norris-Taylor, Tommy Gibbons, Sugar Ray Leonard's career, Sugar Ray Robinson (color).

Oct. 1992: The Supreme Dream: The Heavyweight Hopes Of The Heavyweight Hopefuls. Plus: Kevin Kelley, All-Time Top 10: South Africa, Meldrick Taylor, Sharmba Mitchell, Bob Foster, Eder Jofre, Max Baer (color).

Nov. 1992: Is Riddick Bowe The Next Heavyweight Champion? Plus: Morrison-Hipp, Canizales-Chandler, Chavez-Camacho preview, Australia Best of Nation, Tyson speaks from prison, Corbett-Sullivan (color), Tracy Patterson, Pat Barrett, Knockout Brown.

Feb. 1993: America's Tribute To The Brown Bomber: Joe Louis. Plus: Virgil Hill, Junior Jones, Roger Mayweather, Chicago boxing, Orlando Zulueta, Jose Napoles (color).

March 1993: From Question Man To Answer Man: Riddick Bowe Leaves No Doubts. Plus: Lennox Lewis, Lopez-Gamache, Frank Bruno, Rocky Kansas, Frank Fletcher, Crisanto Espana, Bowe-Lewis (color).

April 1993: Riddick Bowe: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: "Grand Slam" fight card, Toney-Barkley preview, Morris East, Joe Louis-John Henry Lewis,

All-Time Top 10: Argentina, Fighters of the Year (color).

May 1993: Oscar De La Hoya's Sprint To The Title: Is He Good Enough *Now?* Plus: Carbajal-Gonzalez preview, Lennox Lewis, THE RING Poll, Freddie Pendleton.

Aug. 1993: A Ring Exclusive: Julio Cesar Chavez Speaks Out. Plus: Bobby Czyz, 10 hardest punchers, Rafael Ruelas, Carmen Basilio, closing of the Fifth Street Gym, Sugar Ray Leonard (color).

Oct. 1993: Tommy Morrison: Good Enough To Beat Big George, But Will He Win The Heavyweight Title? Plus: Riddick Bowe, Mike Capriano, Billy Conn-Joe Louis, All-Time Top 10: Puerto Rico, Charles Murray.

April 1994: Michael Carbajal: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Brown-Norris, Kevin Kelley, Ceferino Garcia, Oscar De La Hoya, Tunney Hunsaker, Spinks-Foster.

Aug. 1994: Bowe's Back! Determined To Do It Again. Plus: Eric Griffin, Pernell Whitaker, Ray Mercer, Roger Donoghue, State of the Game (midterm report), All-Time Top 10: The Philippines.

Oct. 1994: Rating The Champs: Whitaker & Toney Lead The Field ... But Roy Jones Is Closing Fast. Plus: Oscar De La Hoya, Meldrick Taylor, Rafael Ruelas, Curtis Cokes.

Nov. 1994: With Lewis Fighting Bowe ... Is Michael Moorer's Career Off-Target? Plus: Wayne McCullough, Hall of Fame, Alejandro Lavorante, Rocky Marciano, Paz-Duran, Injuries (part I), What If ... Pedroza vs. Sanchez.

Dec. 1994: Fighting-Mad! James Toney Just Wants To Beat People Up. Plus: Duran & Robinson, Don King, Mike McCallum, Injuries (part II), Tom Molineaux.

Jan. 1995: A Puncher's Dream: Oliver McCall Upsets Boxing's Balance Of Power. Plus: Ruelas brothers, Quincy Taylor, "Unfinished Business," Dave Maier, All-Time Top 10: Canada.

May 1995: The State Of The Game. Plus: Olzubek & Arbachakov, Gonzalez-Kelley, Pazienza-Duran II, All-Time Top 10: France.

June 1995: (92-Page Special): Foreman Frowns Upon The Age Gap: "I Don't Think Tyson Should Fight Anyone But Me." Plus: Least deserving heavyweight challengers, Carlos Monzon, Kostya Tszyu.

July 1995: Pernell Whitaker: *The Ring* Makes "Pound-For-Pound" An Official Title. Plus: Riddick Bowe, Ike Quartey, Benn-McClellan, TV prospects, Hector Acero-Sanchez, Harry Matthews, What If ... Robinson-Burley.

Oct. 1995 (92-Page Special): Mismatch? Don't Tell Peter McNeeley! Plus: Fights we'd like to see, Jo-el Scott, Bronco McKart, when stop fights?

Winter 1995 (92-Page Special): Buster Mathis Jr.: "Mike Tyson, You Got A Fight Comin' On." Plus: Holyfield-Bowe III preview, Wayne McCullough, Jesse James Hughes, Norris-Vaden preview, *The Ring* Insiders' Poll, What If ... Moore-Ayala Jr.

Feb. 1996: Bowe's The Man (For Now), But Is He Man Enough For Tyson? Also: Lennox Lewis, Hamed-Barrera, Paul Banke, Vince Phillips, boxing on Madison Ave., What If ... Leonard-Pryor.

May 1996: Exclusive Annual Report: The State Of The Game. Plus: Frankie Randall, Tim Witherspoon, Roy Jones, Bernard Hopkins.

Sept. 1996: Lennox Lewis: Tough Enough For Tyson? Plus: Lewis-Mercer, Olympic team, Pernell Whitaker, Mark Johnson, Rocky, Scrapiron Johnson, heavyweight hopefuls.

Nov. 1996: Pole-Axed! Low Blows, Sinking Bowe, Ugly Show. Plus: Bowe-Golota I, Blinky Palermo, exciting fighters, Winky Wright, Joe Brown.

Dec. 1996: Our Spin On Roy Jones. Plus: heavyweight division, Olympic recap, Luis Rodriguez, Puerto Rican fighters, Danny Hodge, Saad Muhammad.

May 1997: De La Hoya-Whitaker: Can "Sweet Pea" Stop Oscar's March To Greatness? Plus: Fitzsimmons-Corbett, Junior Jones, Phillip Holiday, Don King, Zaragoza-McCullough.

June 1997 (Special Collector's Issue): Holyfield-Tyson II: What It Means For Now ... And Forever. Plus: Holyfield-Tyson fight poster, Naseem Hamed, computer unification, Sayers-Heenan, state of the game.

July 1997: Leonard: There Wasn't Even A Ray Of Hope. Plus: Felix Trinidad, David Reid, Willie deWit & Shawn O'Sullivan, THE RING's 75th anniversary, Moore-Durelle I.

Oct. 1997: Bang! Naseem Hamed Takes Aim At America. Plus: Riddick Bowe, Phillips-Tszyu, Saman Sorjaturong, Bobby Dykes.

Holiday 1997: Roy Jones: When He's Motivated, He's Unstoppable—Got That, Evander? Plus: Julio Cesar Green, Sugar Shane Mosley, boxers' day jobs, Tyson's mentor, Kid Lavigne.

Jan. 1998: Give This Man His Due! If You Can't Respect Oscar ... You Can't Respect Anyone! Plus: Sanchez-Mayweather, Morales-Zaragoza. Lucia Rijker, Marvin Johnson, characters.

Feb. 1998: Welter-Skelter! The Hottest Division In Boxing. Plus: Lewis-Golota, Olympic update. Art Shires, boxing I.Q.

March 1998 (92-Page Special): Into The Millennium With The Real Deal: THE RING'S Timeline For Evander Holyfield. Plus: Hernandez-Hernandez, Briggs-Foreman, 10 champs recall "The Day I Won The Title," Johnny Thompson.

April 1998: Evander Holyfield: THE RING'S Fighter Of The Year (Again!). Plus: Yory Boy Campas, Mullings-Norris, Pinkey Mitchell, Holyfield Q & A, Hamed-Kelley, Oscar De La Hoya.

May 1998: Wrestling With His Reinstatement: Is Tyson Biting The Hand That Feeds Him? Plus: Lewis-Briggs preview. Michael Grant, Manfredy-Gatti, Ski Goldstein, Dan Donnelly.

June 1998 (92-Page Special): The State Of The Game. Plus: Tyson-King, David Reid, Bernard Hopkins, Ken Norton.

July 1998: Holyfield ... Tapia ... Hamed ... Jones ... Trinidad ... De La Hoya: Who Will Be The First To Fall? Plus: Magic Johnson, Chavez-Gonzalez & Lopez-Alvarez, underappreciated boxers.

Aug. 1998: Lennox Lewis: No Holyfield, No Glory. Plus: Felix Trinidad, Pat & Mike McMurtry, Chris Byrd, unbreakable records, contenders & pretenders.

Sept. 1998 (92-Page Special): This Man's Not Unbeatable! Five Top Trainers Reveal How To Solve The Hamed Puzzle. Plus: John Tate, Freddie Norwood, Andrew Golota, Roy Jones, 12 greatest finishes.

Oct. 1998: Really Hard Punch ... Really Soft Lips: Oscar Makes Legs Quiver In And Out Of The Ring. Plus: Hector Camacho Jr., Mayweather-Hernandez preview, *Tuesday Night Fights.*

Nov. 1998: Oscar De La Hoya vs. The All-Time Greats. Plus: David Reid, Fernando Vargas, Cory Spinks, LeRoy Neiman, Don King, Hall of Fame.

Jan. 1999: Sugar Shane Mosley: The Sweet Tradition Continues. Plus: Evander Holyfield, Julio Cesar Chavez, Erik Morales, Ray "Windmill" White.

Feb. 1999: 1999! It's Gonna Be A Great Year For Boxing. Plus: Mike Tyson, Foreman-Holmes, David Reid, Eric Morel, Richie Mitchell, quitters.

March 1999: De La Hoya vs. Quartey: Does Bazooka Have The Weapons To Shoot Down Oscar? Plus: Sugar Shane Mosley, Lopez-Alvarez II, Roy Jones, Coley Wallace.

April 1999 (92-Page Special): Fighter Of The Year: Floyd Mayweather Jr.: "He's So Good, It's Scary!" Plus: Fernando Vargas, James Page, Luisito Espinosa, Robinson-Gatti II, Archie Moore, Carlos Oritz, 1998 diary.

May 1999: Is It All Over For Tyson? Plus: Terry Norris, Vinny Pazienza, Jesus Pimental, stoppages, mandatories.

June 1999: The Fans Have Spoken: Results Of *The Ring* Readers' Poll. Plus: Michael Grant, De La Hoya-Quartey, Antwun Echols, Ted Lowry.

July 1999 (92-Page Special): The State Of The Game. Plus: Holyfield-Lewis, Felix Trinidad, Stevie Johnston, Emile Griffith. Phil Zwick.

Aug. 1999: Candidates For Greatness: Can Anyone Fill The Heavyweight Void? Plus: Tim Austin, Naseem Hamed, Oscar De La Hoya, Max Scmheling, Holyfield-Lewis.

Sept. 1999: Taking Stock In The Fight Game: Who's Hot, Who's Not. Plus: Tony Ayala, Keith Holmes, Denny & Phil Moyer, scoring.

Oct. 1999 (92-Page Special): Felix & Oscar Go To War! Who's Going To Prevail In The Welter Shootout? Plus: Floyd Mayweather, Harry Simon, Omar Sheika, Al Andrews, 20 greatest fighters of 20th century.

Dec. 1999: Insiders' Analysis: Can Roy Jones Chop Down The Best Heavyweights? Plus: Ike Ibeabuchi, David Reid, David Tua, Carmen Basilio, Johnny Summerlin.

Holiday 1999 (92-Page Special): Heavyweight Showdowns! Holyfield vs. Lewis II, Grant vs. Golota. Plus: Francois Botha, Arturo Gatti, Michael Carbajal, Rocky Marciano, Lou Filippo.

Jan. 2000: What Does Trinidad's Victory Over Oscar Mean? Plus: Floyd Mayweather, Paul Spadafora, Ralph Dupas, boxing media.

Feb. 2000: Who Is Roy Jones? A Revealing Look At Boxing's Pound-For-Pound Best. Plus: Tyson-Norris, Matty McCue, tactical blunders, best fights of the '90s.

March 2000: Lennox Lewis: The Champ For The Millennium ... Or Just For The Moment? Plus: Oleg Maskaev, Main Events, Derrick Jefferson, Jerry Buss, IBF scandal.

April 2000 (92-Page Special): Paulie Ayala—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Evander Holyfield, Grant-Golota, Stephan Johnson, Gaspar Ortega, Kitten Hayward, writers' favorite fights.

May 2000: Lennox Lewis Will Quit ... Or Get Knocked Out, By Michael Grant. Plus: Roy Jones, Quartey-Vargas preview, Garth Panter, best chins, boxing movies.

June 2000: The Honors Keep Coming! Lenox Lewis Receives The Undisputed *Ring* Belt. Plus: Roy Jones, Vernon Forrest, Teddy Atlas, Mike Tyson, Don Fullmer.

July 2000 (92-Page Special): The State Of The Game. Plus: Felix Trinidad, Zab Judah, Oscar De La Hoya, Barrera-Morales, Ken Buchanan, Beau Jack, Eric Bottjer.

Aug. 2000: Hamed! And The Men Who Want To Kick His Naz! Plus: David Reid, James Prince, Anthony Fletcher, Micky Ward, final beatings, white hopes.

Sept. 2000: A New Look At Lennox Lewis: Is He An All-Time Great? Plus: Winky Wright, Michael Moorer, De La Hoya & Vargas, Eddie McGoorty.

Oct. 2000 (92-Page Special): Move Up Or Shut Up! We're Sick Of Roy Jones' Heavyweight Tease. Plus: Lennox Lewis, Tapia & Romero, Hasim Rahman, Dwight Qawi, Al Palzer, fight films, best refs.

Nov. 2000: Make The Tyson-Lewis Fight Now! Plus: Mosley-De La Hoya, Acelino Freitas, Pat Lawlor, Fred Norwood, Jeff Chandler, Vito Antuofermo.

(ALL-COLOR BEGINNING WITH THE DECEMBER 2000 ISSUE)

Dec. 2000: The Hell With Tyson—Tua Is The Man Who Could Beat Lewis. Plus: Mike Tyson, Felix Trinidad, Wladimir Klitschko, Trilla in Manila, U.S. vs. World, Toxey Hall.

Jan. 2001 (108-Page Extra): Trinidad's Destiny: Jones Is On His Mind ... But Vargas Is In His Face! Plus: Naseem Hamed, Tszyu-Judah, Evander Holyfield, Willie Bean, 20 greatest middleweights.

Feb. 2001: It's Not Over For Oscar: *The Ring's* Five-Step Recovery Plan. Plus: Bob Arum, Dingaan Thobela, Hernandez brothers, U.S. Olympic team, future pound-for-pounders.

March 2001 (108-Page Extra): Tyson! Forget About Retirement ... A Title Shot Awaits! Plus: Ayala-Tapia II, Audley Harrison, Chris Byrd, Kirk Johnson, Julio Cesar Chavez, Boone Kirkman, 12 most exciting rounds.

April 2001: A New Beginning ... A New Middle: Felix Trinidad Is Ready To Conquer Another Division! Plus: Shane Mosley, Lennox Lewis, Paul Andrews, boxing business.

☐ Mar/82
☐ Feb/83
☐ May/83
☐ Jun/83
☐ Aug/83
☐ Nov/83
All 5 $22

☐ Feb/84
☐ Jun/84
☐ Jul/84
☐ Aug/84
☐ Oct/84
All 5 $22

☐ Jan/85
☐ Feb/85
☐ Apr/85
☐ May/85
☐ Jun/85
☐ Aug/85
☐ Sep/85
☐ Oct/85
☐ Nov/85
☐ Dec/85
All 10 $37

☐ Jan/86
☐ Mar/86
☐ Apr/86

☐ May/86
☐ Jun/86
☐ Jul/86
☐ Aug/86
☐ Sep/86
☐ Dec/86
All 9 $34

☐ Apr/87
☐ May/87
☐ Jun/87
☐ Jul/87
☐ Aug/87
☐ Sep/87
☐ Nov/87
☐ Dec/87
All 8 $31

☐ Jan/88
☐ Feb/88
☐ Apr/88
☐ May/88
☐ Aug/88
☐ Sep/88
☐ Oct/88
☐ Nov/88
All 8 $31

☐ Jan/89
☐ Feb/89
☐ Mar/89

☐ May/89
All 4 $18

☐ Jan/90
☐ Feb/90
☐ Mar/90
☐ Apr/90
☐ May/90
☐ Jun/90
☐ Jul/90
☐ Aug/90
☐ Sep/90
☐ Oct/90
☐ Nov/90
☐ Dec/90
All 12 $43

☐ Jan/91
☐ Feb/91
☐ Mar/91
☐ Apr/91
☐ Jun/91
☐ Jul/91
☐ Aug/91
☐ Oct/91
☐ Dec/91
All 9 $34

☐ May/92
☐ Jun/92
☐ Jul/92

☐ Aug/92
☐ Sep/92
☐ Oct/92
☐ Nov/92
All 7 $28

☐ Feb/93
☐ Mar/93
☐ Apr/93
☐ May/93
☐ Aug/93
☐ Oct/93
All 6 $25

☐ Apr/94
☐ Aug/94
☐ Oct/94
☐ Nov/94
☐ Dec/94
All 5 $22

☐ Jan/95
☐ May/95
☐ Jun/95
☐ Jul/95
☐ Oct/95
☐ Wint/95
All 6 $25

☐ Feb/96
☐ May/96

☐ Sep/96
☐ Nov/96
☐ Dec/96
All 5 $22

☐ May/97
☐ Jun/97
☐ Jul/97
☐ Oct/97
☐ Hol/97
All 5 $22

☐ Jan/98
☐ Feb/98
☐ Mar/98
☐ Apr/98
☐ May/98
☐ Jun/98
☐ Jul/98
☐ Aug/98
☐ Sep/98
☐ Oct/98
☐ Nov/98
All 11 $40

☐ Jan/99
☐ Feb/99
☐ Mar/99
☐ Apr/99
☐ May/99
☐ Jun/99

☐ July/99
☐ Aug/99
☐ Sep/99
☐ Oct/99
☐ Dec/99
☐ Hol/99
All 12 $43

☐ Jan/00
☐ Feb/00
☐ Mar/00
☐ Apr/00
☐ May/00
☐ Jun/00
☐ Jul/00
☐ Aug/00
☐ Sep/00
☐ Oct/00
☐ Nov/00
☐ Dec/00
All 12 $40

☐ Jan/01
☐ Feb/01
☐ Mar/01
☐ Apr/01
All 4 $18

In case of sellout, indicate two substitute choices: _____ _____

Please send me the back issues I have checked off. I have enclosed $5 for each issue as payment in full or provided my credit card number to charge my purchase ($20 minimum). Send To:

LONDON PUBLISHING CO.
P.O. BOX 910
FT. WASHINGTON, PA 19034

☐ Check or money order (enclosed and payable to London Publishing Co.)

☐ VISA # _____

☐ MasterCard # _____

ONLY $5 EACH

Expiration Date: __/__ MO/YR

Name _____

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

For all orders except the U.S., you must add $1.50 for every back issue to be sent boat mail, and $3.00 for every back issue to be sent airmail. Int'l money order in U.S. funds only. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

5485/01-01/4c

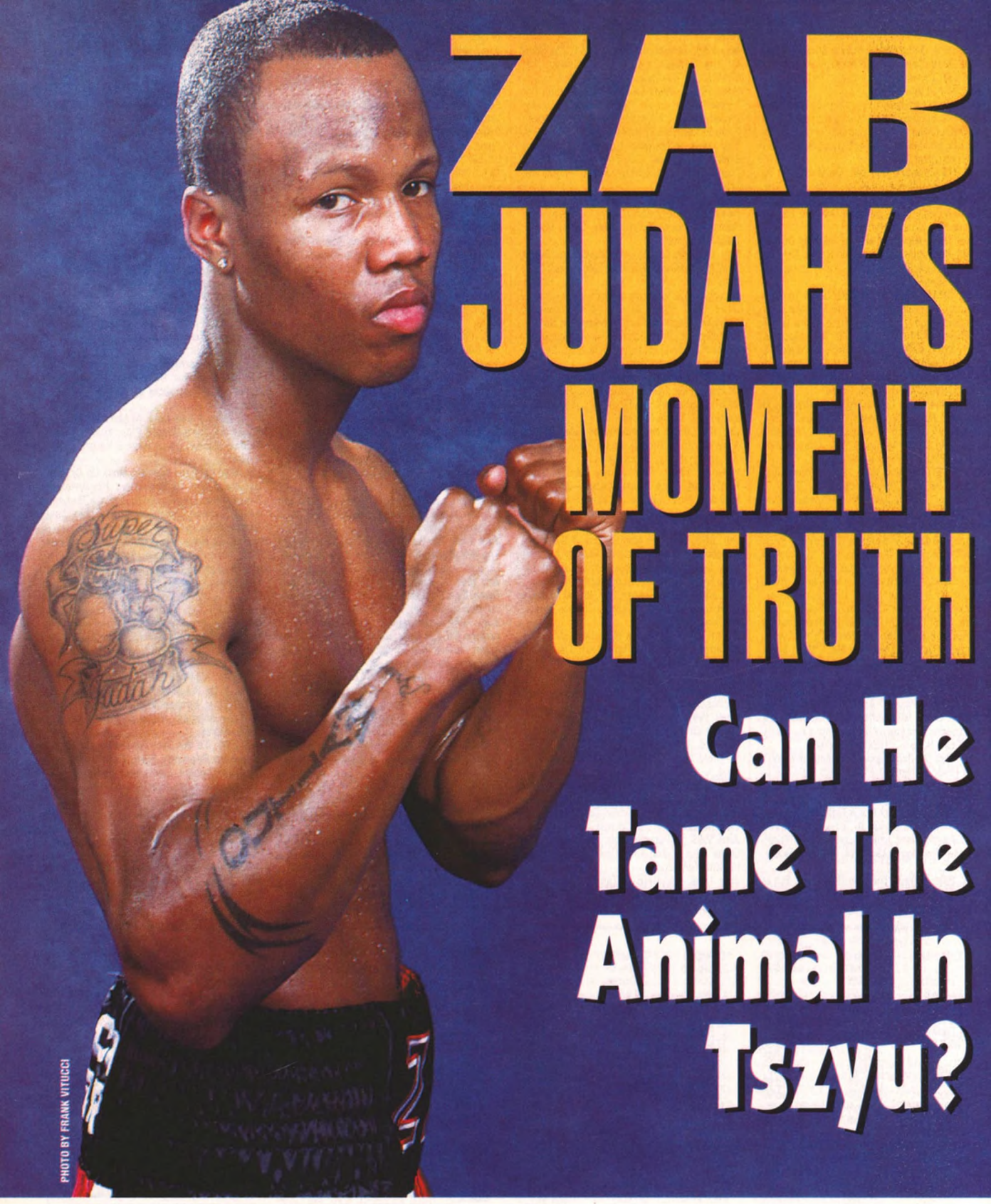


PHOTO BY FRANK VITUCCI

ZAB JUDAH'S MOMENT OF TRUTH

Can He Tame The Animal In Tszyu?

By Johnnie Whitehead

Say what you will about Zab Judah—that he often fights uninspired, that he's more style than substance, that his chin has shown traces of china—but give him this much: He can talk in circles as well as he boxes in them.

For once, however, he won't be able to chatter or dance his way out of a scrap. The Brooklyn, New York, native must put his gloves where his mouth is, and if he's naive enough to take Kostya Tszyu for granted the way he has other opponents, his jaw may be wired shut after this junior welterweight unification showdown scheduled for June 2.

Tszyu is the antithesis of Judah. He has

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

In their most recent fights, Judah and Tszyu both scored stoppage victories, but the reviews were mixed. Judah earned plenty of boos for his overly cautious bout with fringe contender Reggie Green (above), while Tszyu struggled early and fought dirty before eventually wearing down Sharmba Mitchell (below).

the silent, calculating temperament of a hitman and only speaks loudly with the thump from his fists. Judah is a flamboyant cutie, a southpaw who fights from a rhythm inside himself, but mixes it up only when the mood strikes him. Tszyu's aggression is involuntary and instinctual, while Judah has to make a conscious decision to step it up. Tszyu is a consistent, straight-forward go-getter who sets an aggressive tone early. Judah prefers the passive approach, surveying his prey from afar like a jungle cat before asserting himself late.

He won't have that luxury in this fight. The only way to beat Tszyu is to fight fire with fire and face the danger of getting fourth-degree burns, or to surrender like a tearful Sharmba Mitchell, who relinquished the WBA crown to Tszyu in February.

"Look, I'm just going to get it done," said Judah, whose bark has been worse than his platinum bite. "It'll be fun. Everyone knows the talent is there. It'll come out."

It had better. The rugged Russian banger has deceptive hand speed. Granted, he doesn't slip and roll punches well, and his jab is nothing more than a rangefinder. That makes him an easy target for a counterpuncher such as Judah. But it also makes for a perfect fight because if Judah waits too long, he could find himself sniffing smelling salts. While Tszyu lacks the physical gifts of Judah, he makes up for it with a dogged determination that has willed him to a 26-1-1 (22) record. He believes he can hurt his opponent more than his opponent can hurt him and that in the end—if not by skill then by attrition—he will be the last man standing. And he's not alone in this belief.

"Whoever has the momentum at the halfway point will probably close the show," said Showtime analyst Bobby Czyz. "I'm leaning to Tszyu's power and experience. He hits like a full-blown welterweight."

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

PHOTOS BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Tszyu has put his fighting heart on the table many nights, but what about Judah? Will he stick his chin in there and risk getting pounded in order to return the favor? Will he think twice before putting himself on the brink of losing in order to win? Will he cower at the slightest bit of adversity and high-tail it like a scalded dog? If he falls, will he get up and fight with more passion, or will he roll over and play dead quicker than Orlin Norris?

Judah knows what he's up against after watching ringside as the Australia-based Tszyu dismantled Mitchell, who hadn't lost in more than six years. Put forth another half-assed effort, and Judah will be in for a pants-down spanking.

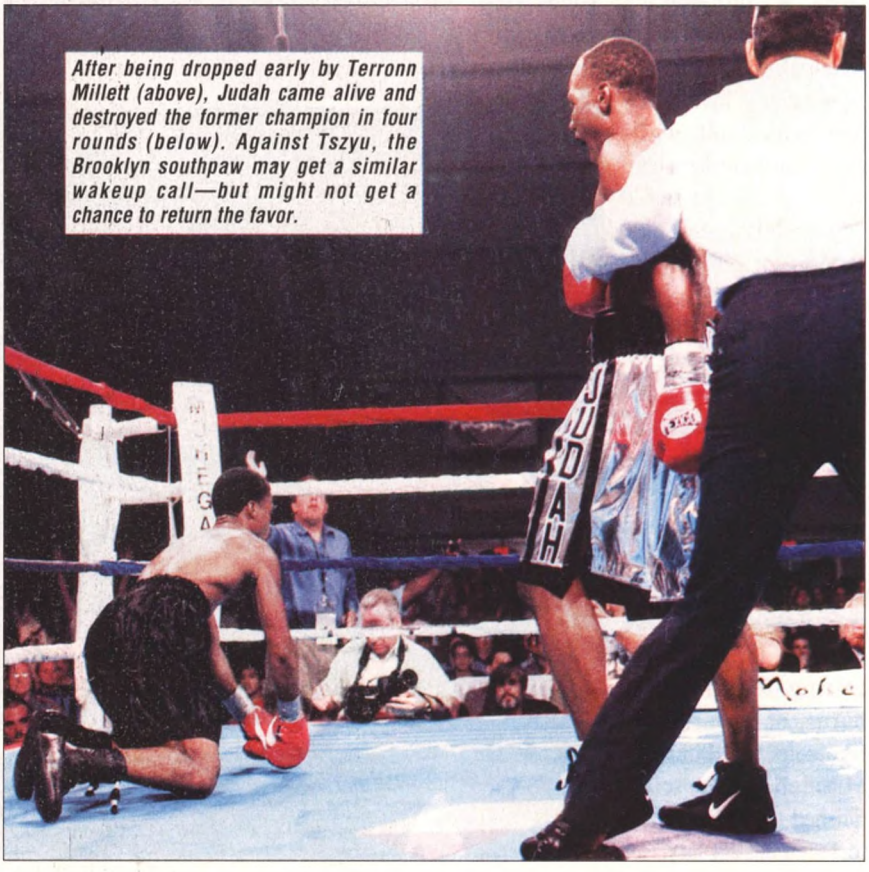
"I'm into humbleness now," said Judah, the usually flashy, dashy, jaw-jacking IBF champion. "I like Kostya. Being a young fighter, I like his humbleness when he went into that fight with Sharmba. Sharmba did all the talking that week about how he was this and that, and Kostya didn't say much. He was quiet, and that was kind of scary because then he got in there and beat the s___ out of Sharmba."

Don't assume he is afraid, Judah says; that's respect talking. For the first time, he knows he has an opponent who not only has the skill to test him, but a warrior's mentality that could push him to limits he's never imagined.

There's no doubt about Judah's skill. He has shown flashes here and there that have led many to elevate him to pound-for-pound status despite his relative inexperience as a professional. Lately, however, Judah, 26-0 (20) with 1 no-contest, has been painful to watch. If it weren't for the incessant booing at his fights, audiences would've been comatose. An exciting Judah fight has been as common as a competitive Roy Jones fight.

"There's no way Judah can come away saying he's not motivated. Tszyu means business," said Bobby Czyz. "For him to beat Kostya Tszyu, he's got to look spectacular. There's no other way around it."

Judah has been unfazed when it comes to his lackluster performances, and he has rebuffed critics and said he doesn't care what fans think of him as long as he wins. Unfortunately for him, that's not the best way to do business in boxing. When you're in the enviable position as the chief supporting bout on Mike Tyson under-



After being dropped early by Terronn Millett (above), Judah came alive and destroyed the former champion in four rounds (below). Against Tszyu, the Brooklyn southpaw may get a similar wakeup call—but might not get a chance to return the favor.

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Tszyu has been beaten once before, by "Cool" Vince Phillips in Atlantic City back in '97. Many observers, including ESPN2's Max Kellerman, feel the Russian-Australian puncher is vastly overrated and won't be able to compete with Judah's speed.

cards—on the biggest stage of your career—it's your job to not only win, but look good in doing so. The better a fighter looks and captivates the crowd, the more he can enhance his future earning capacity. Judah had his chances and, so far, he hasn't cashed in. Fans walked away short-changed by Tyson's fights with Lou Savarese and Andrew Golota, but Judah did little to make up for it by doing the boogaloo all night with Junior Witter and carrying Hector Quiroz.

"It's easy to get bored," said Judah. "So I say to myself, 'Let me play around a bit, dipsy do, stick my tongue out, and have some fun.' Then I say, 'Now, let me get him out of here.'"

That may be entertaining for Judah, but not if you've paid hard-earned money to see it and have dried drool on your sleeve as the only lasting impression. Remember what started Diego Corrales' rise to stardom? He obliterated Roberto Garcia in the chief supporting bout on Tyson-Orlin Norris. The main event was a stinker, but everyone walked away talking about the tall, lanky kid from Sacramento, California, who put on one hell of a show in a thrilling brawl to become a world champion.

Judah has yet to grasp that part of the business, and whether he wants to fight with commitment or not doesn't matter to Tszyu. He doesn't give out free passes, and Judah either will have arrived and will evolve into one of the few undisputed champions in the sport, or he'll be the next recipient of the Ed Hopson Award for impersonating one.

"I'm going to destroy him regardless," said Judah. "That's just my style. He's a good fighter, but he's a one-dimensional fighter. I just hope the fight doesn't end up ugly. His style is to push you and throw elbows. I know my attitude. If he pushes me down, I'm going to push his ass down."

And maybe that's the silver lining in this affair for Judah. When pressed to perform, as he did after getting floored by Terronn Millett, Judah unleashed that wildfire within. The hand speed was blaz-

TSZYU-JUDAH: STAFF PICKS

Nigel Collins: Judah W 12

"Providing he has the discipline to stick to an intelligent fight plan, Judah's hand and leg speed will allow him to run and slap his way to a close decision in a disappointing and at times sloppy fight."

Eric Raskin: Judah KO 8

"The speed disparity here is just too much for Tszyu to overcome. Judah will outbox him in the early rounds, then step it up once frustration sets in for the Russian. Judah is an excellent finisher, so look for him to put Tszyu away the first time he has him seriously hurt."

Joe Santoliquito: Judah KO 10

"I get the impression that Judah can be lured into a slugfest with Tszyu, which will make for an exciting fight, with the possibility of Judah being knocked down somewhere in the middle rounds. After Judah learns his lesson, he'll resort to his quickness, aggravate Tszyu into making a mistake, and capitalize on it in the later rounds."

William Dettloff: Tszyu W 12

"My head says Judah should outbox Tsyzu easily, but my gut says Tszyu is quick-handed enough, strong enough, and tough enough to outlast Judah in a grueling 12-round fight."

Jeff Ryan: Tszyu KO 8

"It's possible to envision this becoming another Mayweather-Corrales, with Judah simply too fast and slick for the wide-open Tszyu. The more likely scenario, however, is Tszyu's right-hand power and relentless pressure proving too much for Judah's shaky chin. Judah has recently revealed some weaknesses, while Tszyu is on the best roll of his career. At age 31, he's also more desperate."

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Referee Arthur Mercante raised Judah's hand after the Green fight, but just a few minutes earlier, he was admonishing him for a lack of offensive output. How aggressive Judah will be against Tszyu, by far the most dangerous opponent of his career, is difficult to guess.

ing. The power was crippling. Who could forget that nasty uppercut that knocked Millett goofy? Millett, a credible and worthy former champion, was out of his league and soon succumbed to the two-fisted barrage. When Jan Bergman dropped Judah early in their fight for the vacant title, he managed only to seal his fate that he wouldn't last the distance.

Both knockdowns of Judah were products of left hooks, and it has many questioning whether Judah can take a hard shot from Tszyu. ESPN2 analyst Max Kellerman is not among them.

"I don't think this is close," said Kellerman, who was trumpeting Judah's talents long before he became champion. "I don't think Kostya hits nearly as hard as Zab. What Kostya has is overrated punching power, underrated hand speed. How many pressure fighters have quicker hands?

"The one thing Bergman can do is punch with his left hook. Zab loves the left uppercut, but he has a tendency to throw it from too far away. When that happens, you're supposed to get countered. Millett is a much harder puncher than Tszyu, and what happened? Zab got up and pounded him into submission."

Judah seems to need a wakeup call to jump-start a stalled engine. He can be caught cold, but he warms up quickly. It would be wise to not let the former happen with Tszyu, who might not give him the chance to do the latter.

"Look, this is the kind of boxer Zab is. He's aggressive when he gets a guy hurt, but other times he tries to minimize risk and not expose himself to danger," said Kellerman. "Against a cagey guy who's not going to take a lot of risks, neither will Zab.

"Maybe Zab doesn't trust his chin the way someone like Shane Mosley trusts his chin. Maybe Zab is one of these guys who occasionally will get dropped, but never be in trouble of getting stopped."

Others aren't as convinced of Judah's ability to keep bouncing back from adversity.

"Tszyu has a way of walking you down," said veteran trainer Pepe Correa. "And let's face it, once he hits you with a shot and you wobble, he has no respect for you the rest of the fight. There aren't that many Felix Trinidads in the world, where you can knock them down and they figure out a way to beat you. Zab seems to lose focus. You can't lose focus against Tszyu."

Still, a win over Tszyu, Judah assures, is academic, and he's even looking ahead to the short-term future. He doesn't expect to stay much longer in the 140-pound class. The only fight that would interest him would be one with old amateur nemesis Hector Camacho Jr.

"I want to come in the ring, look pretty one time with all three belts, beat up somebody, and that's it," said Judah.

Kellerman suggests a catchweight fight between Judah and junior lightweight champion Floyd Mayweather would be intriguing, but Judah is looking north—to welterweight champion Shane Mosley.

"I'm on a paper chase," said Judah. "Shane was on one when he beat his big opponent [Oscar De La Hoya]. That's what this is all about. Getting paid."

HBO, who has Mosley under contract, agrees and would be interested, but that fight won't happen anytime soon. "It's an attractive matchup," said HBO Sports Vice President of Programming Kery Davis. "But Shane's dance card is pretty full [Andrew "Six Heads" Lewis, Vernon Forrest, possibly a rematch with De La Hoya]. I don't think he's losing any sleep wondering if Zab makes it or not. We'll see."

If Judah is as special as he says he is, he'll make it to that level. If not, he may not be able to live down the critics who will follow him to his grave. Kellerman, for one, doesn't see that happening.

"Reggie Green barely lost to Sharmba Mitchell, and he was beating Micky Ward before getting stopped in the last round," he says. "Zab played with Reggie and beat Ward easy. Zab has lost maybe three rounds legitimately in his career. I don't think Tszyu is going to be a taxing fight for Zab. It's going to look like Mayweather-Corrales."

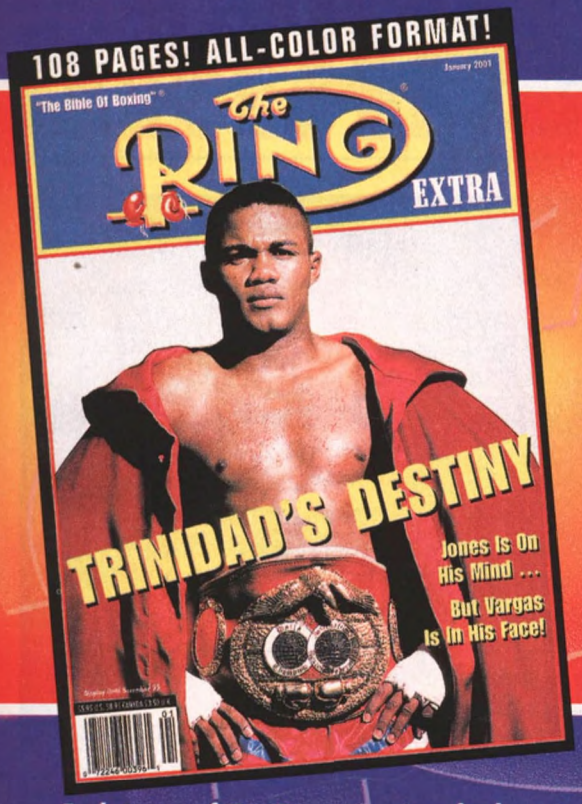
Judah better hope that assessment is on the money and that he's not playing the part of a battered, beaten Corrales. He also doesn't plan on playing the part Sharmba Mitchell played. Even if he fights Tszyu with two broken legs, Judah vows that there won't be any excuses.

"I'm far from a Sharmba Mitchell," said Judah. "Far from it. You'll see. Tszyu will, too. He'll be champion again at junior welter ... but not until I leave." ■

Johnnie Whitehead is an editor for USA Today and a regular contributor to this magazine.

SUBSCRIBE TO THE RING AND $19 IS YOURS TO KEEP!

That's just about what you'll save when you subscribe to THE RING for a year!



Each issue of THE RING contains the best in worldwide boxing coverage with the most dynamic ringside photography ... Columns by the most renowned boxing journalists ... The most respected ratings in the business ... A dip into our vast archives with The Ring Classic ... New Faces ... Camera Clicks.

THERE'S MORE!

Alternating with THE RING every other month is the 108-page RING EXTRA. It's The Ring—and then some!

SAVE ALMOST $19.00!

Now is the perfect time to take advantage of this tremendous offer. With our all-new, full-color format, The Ring is the talk of the boxing business. For more than 75 years, The Ring has set the standard by which boxing magazines are published—and now we are raising the bar!

Send To: **London Publishing Co.**, P.O. Box 2021, Dept. 9, Marion, OH 43306-8121

THREE WAYS TO SAVE!

Please Check Off The One You Wish To Order:

☐ THE RING (6 issues) for $19.00.
That's a savings of nearly $5.00!

☐ THE RING EXTRA (6 issues) for $28.50.
That's a savings of more than $7.00!

Save $19.00!

☐ All 12 issues of THE RING for $41.00.

Please indicate method of payment:

☐ Check or money order (enclosed and payable to London Publishing Co.)

☐ VISA # _____

☐ MasterCard # _____
Expiration Date: ___/___
MO/YR

Signature: _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ APT. ____

CITY _____ STATE ____ ZIP _____

☐ New Subscription ☐ Renewal

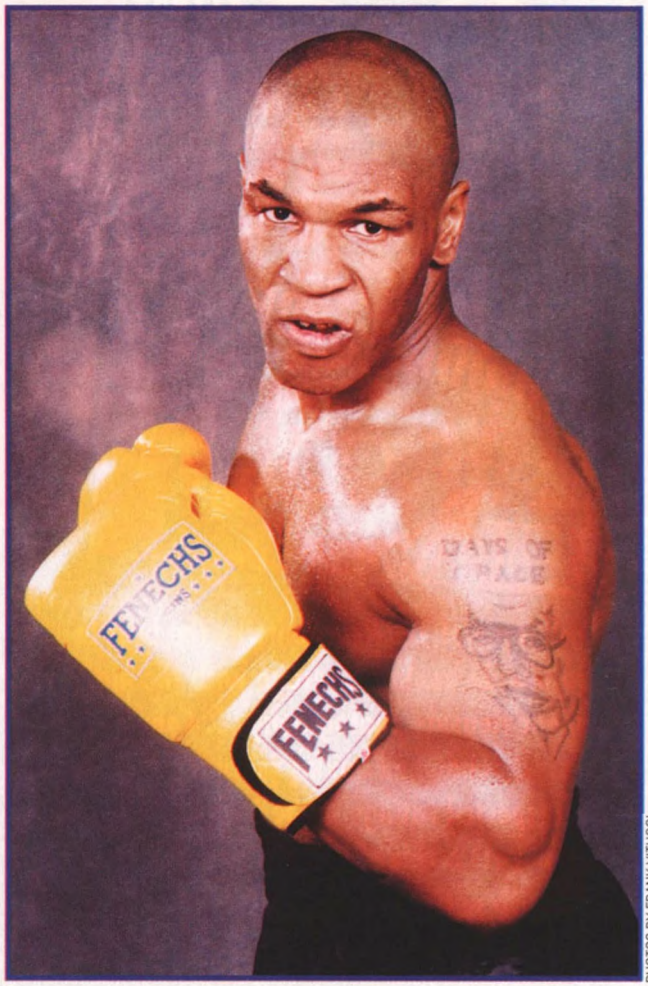
FOR CANADA AND ALL OTHER COUNTRIES: $23.80 FOR THE RING ($34.00 AIRMAIL); $33.30 FOR THE RING EXTRA ($43.50 AIRMAIL); $50.60 FOR THE COMBINATION ($71.00 AIRMAIL). INTERNATIONAL MONEY ORDERS ONLY IN U.S. FUNDS ONLY. PLEASE ALLOW UP TO EIGHT WEEKS BEFORE YOU RECEIVE YOUR FIRST MAGAZINE. OFFER EXPIRES DECEMBER 31, 2001.

5392/02-01/4c

Our Exclusive Annual Report

THE STATE OF THE GAME

Lennox Lewis



Mike Tyson

PHOTOS BY FRANK VITUCCI

By Eric Raskin

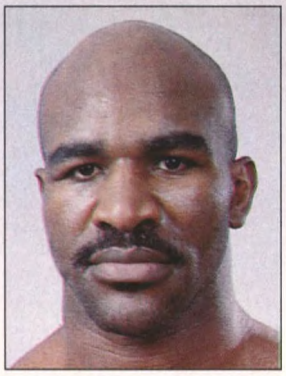
Shane Mosley, Felix Trinidad, Floyd Mayweather, and Roy Jones. No, this isn't some lame Carnac routine, where the question is something to the effect of "Who are the four people we'd most like to see the Backstreet Boys get into a rumble with?" It's an illustration of what a great time it is to be a fight fan. Has there ever been a pound-for-pound debate more compelling than this one? For God's sake, Roy Jones has been called the Michael Jordan of boxing about a million times in his career, and yet there are three guys on the court dunking in Michael Jordan's face!

Great fighters, great fights, unified titles, expanding TV coverage—following the Sweet Science truly has become a treat. Even outside the ropes, with developments such as Bob Lee going to jail and the Ali Bill passing, we can see improvements being made.

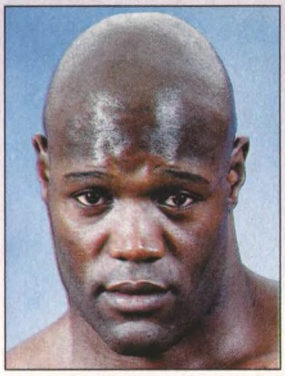
Of course, it's not all roses for the fight game. As illustrated by disappointing recent pay-per-view sales and television ratings, the mainstream fan hasn't caught on, and boxing remains, in most parts of the world, little more than a cult sport. But if you're reading this, you're a part of that cult. And even if everyone else is missing out, you're not missing a second of it. It's their loss if they don't get it. You get it, and over the next 16 pages, you'll get as in-depth a look at the sport you love as you'll find anywhere.

HEAVYWEIGHTS

In the mid-'90s, when Mike Tyson was turning to rust in an Indiana jail cell and Lennox Lewis was turning into a bust against Oliver McCall, you probably wouldn't have guessed that they'd be where they are in 2001. But the Riddick Bowes, Michael Moorers, and Evander Holyfields have all faded, while the Andrew Golotas, Michael Grants, and David Tuas have simply failed, leaving 35-year-old Lewis and 34-year-old Tyson atop the heavyweight heap. Lewis got there by beating Holyfield, Golota, Grant, Tua, and countless others, earning the right to call himself champion. Tyson got there through marketing, matchmaking, and magnetism, remaining the biggest name in the sport and arguably the most deserving contender to Lewis with a run of kayo victories over fringe contenders.



Evander Holyfield



Clifford Etienne

There are a few other guys with a claim to that number-one contender spot, however, and if Lewis-Tyson doesn't come off due to the HBO-Showtime stalemate, maybe they'll get their shot. One is John Ruiz, who holds the trivial WBA title and, more importantly, a clear-cut victory over Holyfield. Ruiz' toughness makes up for some of his athletic mediocrity, and a win over a washed-up Holyfield is still a win over Holyfield. Kirk Johnson is the last of the mid-'90s prospects to sport an unbeaten record, and he brings a decent mix of speed and power. And Wladimir Klitschko is perhaps as physically blessed as Lewis, though his mental makeup remains in doubt.

Unfortunately, there is nobody young and particularly impressive among the current prospects, leaving the sport's glamour division in serious jeopardy when Lewis and Tyson move on. It's scary to think that boxing fans have spent the last 10 years or so waiting for the second coming of Mike Tyson, and here we are still watching the first coming.

Think About It: Is Lewis the most dominant heavyweight of the last 15 years? Over the past 12 months, he overtook Tyson in two statistical categories, lending further credence to the belief that Lewis is the best of this era. His current WBC reign has crossed the four-year mark, longer than anyone since Larry Holmes, and he has now made 12 successful title defenses in his career, compared to nine for Tyson and seven for Holyfield. In fact, Lewis is now fourth among all-time heavyweights on that list, behind only Joe Louis, Holmes, and Muhammad Ali.

HEAVYWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Mike Tyson

Best Boxer
Lennox Lewis

Most Protected
Andre Purlett

Is He *Still* Around?
Mike Weaver

Matchmaker's Dream
Lennox Lewis-Mike Tyson

Deserves A Title Shot
Mike Tyson

Most Fun To Watch
Clifford Etienne

On The Way Down
David Tua

Underrated
Michael Grant

Overrated
Wladimir Klitschko

Best Fight In 2000
Clifford Etienne W 10
Lawrence Clay-Bey

CRUISERWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Juan Carlos Gomez

Best Boxer
Virgil Hill

Most Protected
Jesper Kristiansen

Is He *Still* Around?
Jorge Castro

Matchmaker's Dream
Juan Carlos Gomez-
Vassiliy Jirov

Deserves A Title Shot
Johnny Nelson

Most Fun To Watch
Vassiliy Jirov

On The Way Down
Fabrice Tiozzo

Underrated
Louis Azille

Overrated
Torsten May

Best Fight In 2000
Vassiliy Jirov KO 9
Saul Montana

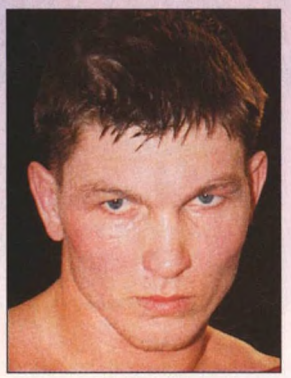
CRUISERWEIGHTS

You know a division is all but dead when *Virgil Hill* comes along and livens it up. It took all of 2 minutes, 59 seconds for Hill to take the WBA title from Fabrice Tiozzo last December, and in that time, the cruiserweight class went from being virtually flatlined, to at least breathing without the help of a respirator.

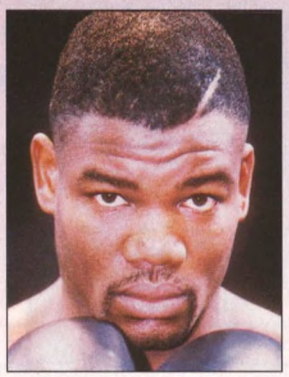
A year ago, the cruisers appeared on the upswing, with

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Virgil Hill takes the WBA cruiser crown from Fabrice Tiozzo



Vassiliy Jirov



Juan Carlos Gomez

IBF champ Vassiliy Jirov developing into the most exciting TV fighter at 190 pounds since Evander Holyfield, and with James Toney seemingly serious about his comeback. But Jirov quickly disappeared while he worked out his promotional problems, and Toney promptly vanished, presumably because a new Dunkin Donuts opened up down the block. Whatever the reason, the momentum this disparaged weight class had been building was stalled out big time.

But Hill, a likable veteran with a name, a resume, and, all of a sudden, a punch, could change that. He says he wants to unify; that's great news. Jirov, who's now back on track with Panix Promotions, feels the same way, and may start by meeting WBO titleholder Johnny Nelson later this year. Undefeated WBC king Juan Carlos Gomez has decided to try his hand against the heavyweights, but he's said he'll return to cruiser to make mandatory defenses or to unify. That's exactly what this division needs. With an undisputed champion—and with Hill doing us the favor of ensuring that it won't be Tiozzo—the cruisers might not be such a big joke after all.

Think About It: In 25 career world title fights, Hill has now fought 259 championship rounds, leaving him just one shy of former bantamweight champ Manuel Ortiz for the 10th spot on the all-time list. The only active fighter with more title rounds under his belt is Larry Holmes, with 265. In case you're wondering, it would take at least seven more title bouts for Hill to pass Emile Griffith for the number-one spot.

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS

The state of the light heavyweight division revolves, as it has for over four years now, around the state of one man: Roy Jones. And at the moment, that's really bad news for the light heavyweight division.

Since unifying the titles against Reggie Johnson in June '99, Jones hasn't done a single thing to make us care about him. His fights have become so boring that a name change to Roy Camacho may be in order. Most of the guys he takes on are legitimate top 10 contenders, but in a division this weak, that means virtually nothing, especially when Dariusz Michalczewski is still undefeated and still being avoided. Jones may still be popular in Pensacola, Florida, and Biloxi, Mississippi, but everywhere else, his stock is plummeting. A year ago, he was an all-but-unanimous choice for pound-for-pound king. Now, on many lists, including THE RING's, he's plunged to number four.

What will it take to revitalize Jones' career and the light heavyweight division? Obviously, a meeting with Michalczewski is crucial (and looking encouraging as we went to press). But the problem is, assuming Jones wins, there's nowhere to go after that. Jones is probably going to drop in weight to fight Felix Trinidad sometime in early-2002, and that would mean a re-splintered title with all the mediocre fighters Jones already beat scrambling to pick up vacant, devalued belts. The super middleweight division might get interesting very soon, but for the 175-pound class, the outlook is bleak.

Think About It: If only Jones had a little Julian Letterlough in him. "Mr. KO" is everything Jones isn't, in that he's not especially talented and is a relative newcomer to the fight game, yet makes great fights and has the fire that is so

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Roy Jones

Best Boxer
Roy Jones

Most Protected
Roy Jones

Is He *Still* Around?
Michael Nunn

Matchmaker's Dream
Roy Jones-Dariusz Michalczewski

Deserves A Title Shot
Dariusz Michalczewski

Most Fun To Watch
Julian Letterlough

On The Way Down
Montell Griffin

Underrated
Eric Harding

Overrated
Glenn Kelly

Best Fight In 2000
Julian Letterlough KO 7 Demetrius Jenkins

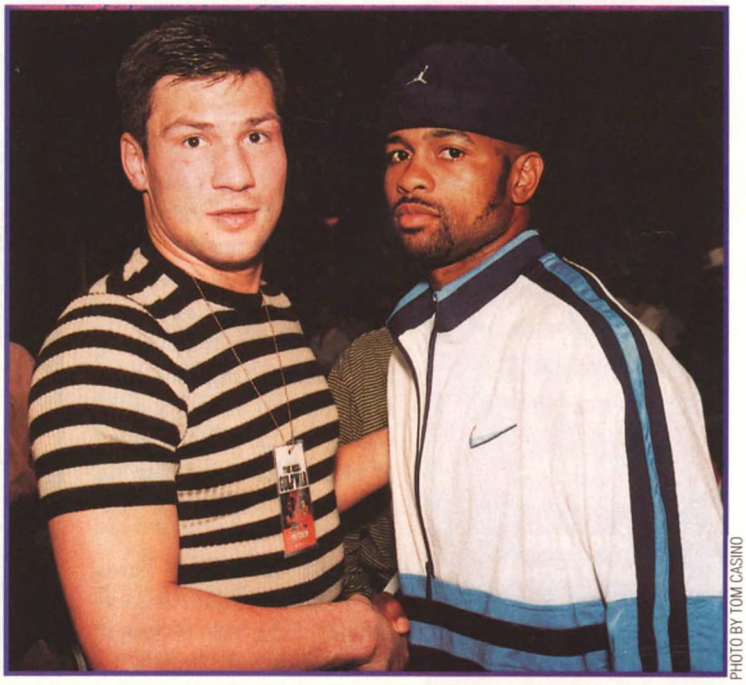


PHOTO BY TOM CASINO

Will Dariusz Michalczewski and Roy Jones get it on?

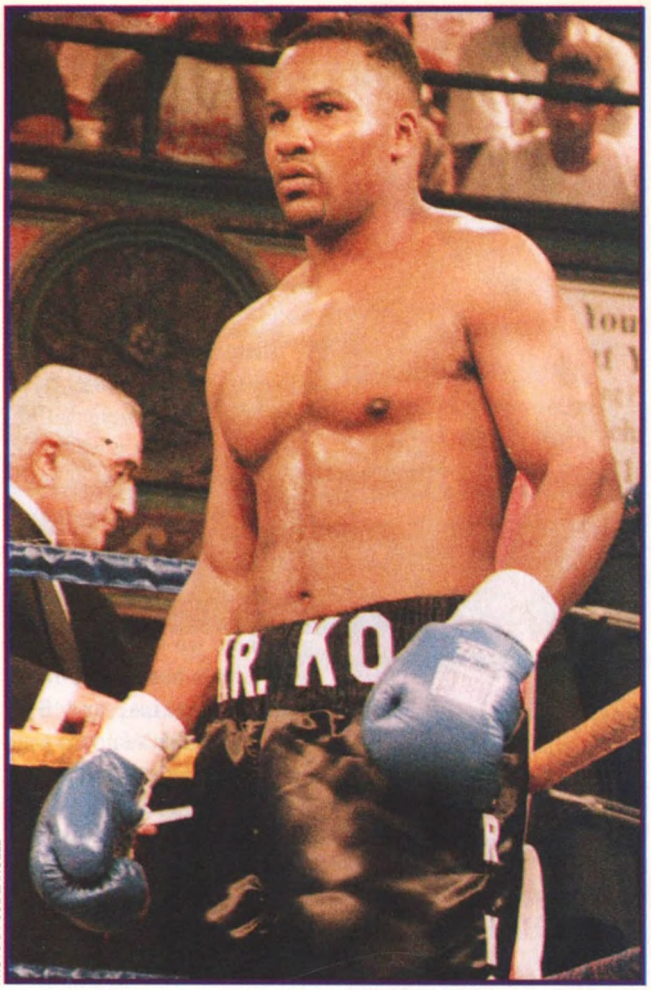
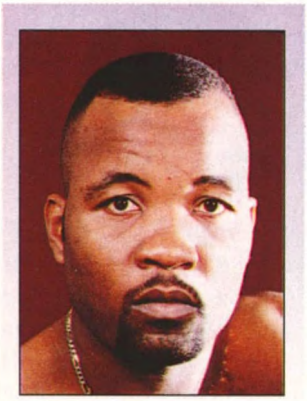


PHOTO BY JOE ZANOLLE

Julian Letterlough

obviously lacking in Jones. In a span of less than seven months, Letterlough was involved in three back-to-back-to-back thrillers: his come-from-behind kayo of Demetrius Jenkins, his entertaining draw with Sammy Ahmad, and his five-knockdown war with Julio Gonzalez. The Jenkins and Gonzalez fights in particular have to rank among the top five bouts in the history of ESPN2's *Friday Night Fights*.



Reggie Johnson

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS

All you need to know about the 168-pound division can be learned by checking out the "Matchmaker's Dream" selection in the accompanying sidebar. The most attractive match at super middle, Roy Jones vs. Felix Trinidad, involves a light heavyweight and a soon-to-be middleweight. There is plenty of potential for excitement at super middleweight a few months down the line, but until then, this division is an absolute wasteland, as it has been since Jones departed in 1996.

IBF champion Sven Ottke has now made eight successful title defenses, but the light-hitting German has needed a pinch of home cooking each time he's defended against quality fighters, namely Charles Brewer and Thomas Tate. His other defenses have come against the likes of Lloyd Bryan—who followed his decision loss to Ottke with a first-round kayo loss to Omar Sheika—and North Dakota journeyman Tocker Pudwill. Then there's Joe Calzaghe, holder of the lesser WBO belt. He's on a bit of a roll with entertaining wins over Sheika and Richie Woodhall, but he sounds like a lunatic when he follows a back-and-forth struggle with Woodhall by insisting he wants Jones. WBA champ Byron Mitchell offers virtually nothing besides punching power, and WBC titlist Davey

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT

Best Puncher
James Butler

Best Boxer
Sven Ottke

Most Protected
Dana Rosenblatt

Is He *Still* Around?
Pat Lawlor

Matchmaker's Dream
Roy Jones-Felix Trinidad

Deserves A Title Shot
James Butler

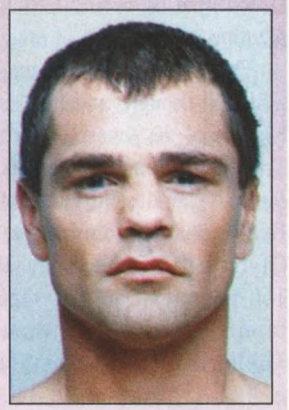
Most Fun To Watch
Omar Sheika

On The Way Down
Vinny Paz

Underrated
Charles Brewer

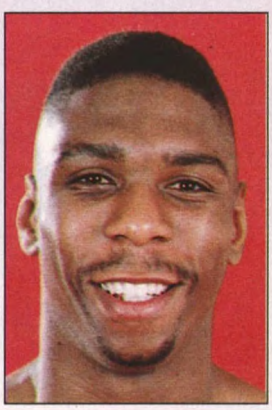
Overrated
Joe Calzaghe

Best Fight In 2000
Joe Calzaghe KO 10 Richie Woodhall

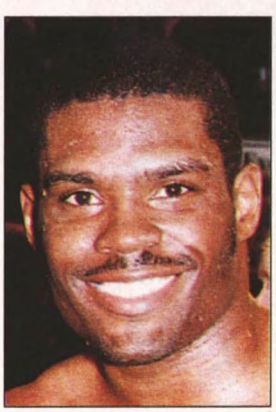


Sven Ottke

Joe Calzaghe



Charles Brewer



James Butler

Hilton may be behind bars by the time you read this.

There's hope for the super middles, though, and not just because of the Joneses and the Trinidads. Up-and-comers like James "The Harlem Hammer" Butler, Anthony Hanshaw, and Olympian Jeff Lacy are all 168-pounders, and Olympic bronze medalist Jermain Taylor may end up here as well.

Think About It: We noted in this space last year that the well-traveled WBC belt had changed hands six times in four years. Make that nine times in five years. Since the last "State Of The Game," Markus Beyer lost it to Glenn Catley, who was kayoed in his first defense by Dingaan Thobela, who lost a split decision to Davey Hilton in his first defense. And Hilton doesn't exactly seem headed for a Joe Louis-like reign.

MIDDLEWEIGHTS

To this point, "The State Of The Game" has been filled with a lot of negativity. *There are no good young heavyweights. Roy Jones is a waste of talent. The super middleweights suck.* Well, say goodbye to that negativity. The middleweights, a division we've all been down on for a while, are getting their act together in a major way.

MIDDLEWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Bernard Hopkins

Best Boxer
Bernard Hopkins

Most Protected
Kevin Palmer

Is He *Still* Around?
Alex Hilton

Matchmaker's Dream
Bernard Hopkins-Felix Trinidad

Deserves A Title Shot
Armand Krajnc

Most Fun To Watch
Bernard Hopkins

On The Way Down
Hassine Cherifi

Underrated
Carl Daniels

Overrated
Howard Eastman

Best Fight In 2000
Yory Boy Campas KO 8 Tony Ayala Jr.

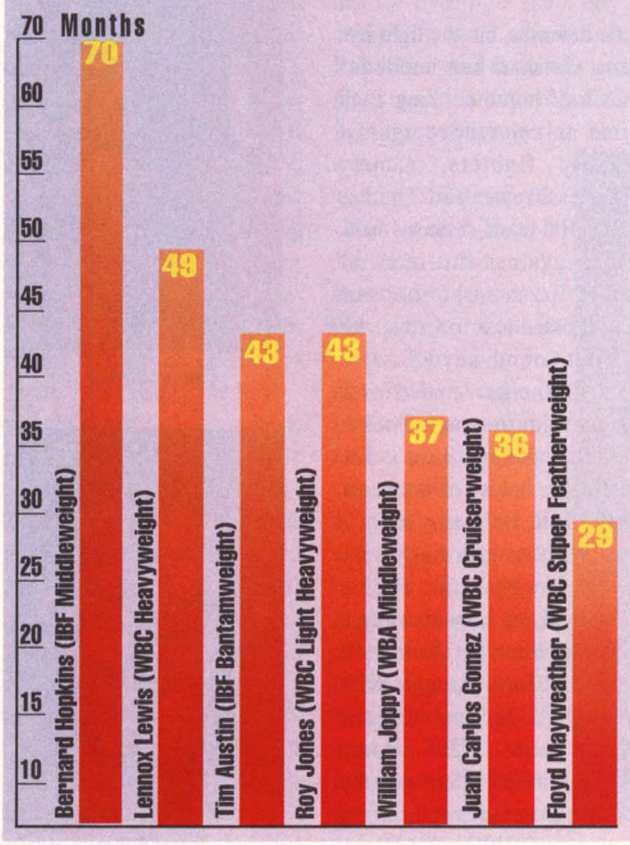
By the time you read this, IBF champ Bernard Hopkins will have unified with WBC titlist Keith Holmes. Shortly thereafter, WBA champion William Joppy will defend against WBA/IBF junior middle king Felix Trinidad. The winners of these two outstanding semifinals are then expected to meet to unify the belts and, quite possibly, determine who gets a superfight at 168 pounds with Jones. Yes, boxing fans, you are being rewarded for your suffering. Hell has frozen over. Or as Showtime's Jay Larkin might say, ripe pork chops are waiting to be plucked from the palm trees in Tel Aviv.

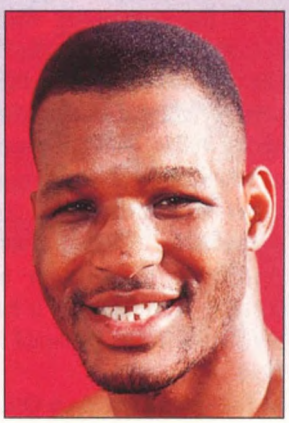
There is one negative point, however, that has to be made about the middleweight division: There is not a whole lot of interest below the championship level. Sweden's Armand Krajnc shows promise, but we've never seen him on TV in America, and there's no guarantee we ever will. Antwun Echols has gone 0-for-2 against Hopkins, and Syd Vanderpool didn't fare too well against him either. And David Reid's flame doesn't look like it'll be burning much longer. In other words, let's enjoy the good times at 160 pounds while we can.

Think About It: It's never been difficult to criticize the ratings of the alphabet bodies, and they made it even easier than usual with their handling of Reid's move to 160 pounds. Both the WBC and WBA installed "The American Dream" at number two—just one spot away from being a mandatory—before he even fought as a middleweight. Then, to compound the error,

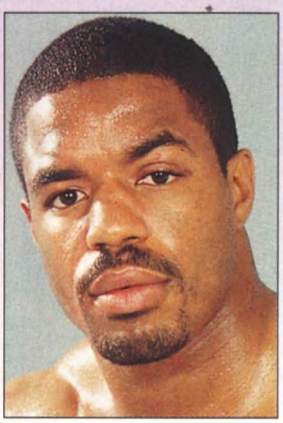
LONGEST-REIGNING CHAMPIONS

The following graph displays the game's most established champions, along with the number of consecutive months each has held the title. Three of the fighters who made the list last year have since dropped off, as Pichit C. Siriwat was stripped of the WBA 108-pound title due to an injury, Erik Morales vacated the WBC 122-pound belt to move up in weight, and Fabrice Tiozzo lost the WBA cruiserweight crown to Virgil Hill.





Bernard Hopkins



David Reid

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

William Joppy takes the fight to Hassine Cherifi

neither sanctioning group dropped him at all after his awful showing against Kirino Garcia last November. In fact, after Reid nearly lost to club-fighter Garcia, the IBF got in on the act and ranked him at number three!

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Until he fights at 160 pounds, Felix Trinidad is still a junior middleweight, and that's why he's still rated number one in this class and why we list him as the division's best puncher and best boxer. But as far as the state of the 154-pound class is concerned, Trinidad is not really a factor, since he'll probably never fight at this poundage again. At the same time, though, the impact from his brief stay here may be felt for some time to come.

Directly, it may be felt by Fernando Vargas, the former IBF champ who was kayoed by "Tito" in the 12th round of an unforgettable war last December. There is speculation in some quarters that due to the physical toll of that fight, Vargas might never be the same again. Nonetheless, the young Californian gives all indications of being eager to return to the ring and prove those doubters wrong.

Indirectly, several fighters may be affected by Trinidad's work at 154 because there will soon be two vacant titles available. Winky Wright and Robert Frazier were listed as the top two IBF contenders as of press time. Shibata Flores and Vargas were tops in the WBA ratings. Should those fights come off, Wright and Vargas would be huge favorites, and a rematch to their excellent, inconclusive fight in December '99 would be a natural if they both acquire belts. Vargas is also targeting WBC champ Francisco Castillejo, so there's hope for total unification at junior middle in the coming months.

Oscar De La Hoya has also hinted at a possible rise in weight soon, plus Ike Quartey, Jose Luis Lopez, and Harry Simon remain in the picture, so there's plenty of reason to believe the junior middleweights will still thrive in the post-Tito era.

Think About It: Once among the game's busiest rising talents, Quartey has fought just twice in over 40 months, and hasn't won in four full years! The incredible thing is that, despite those statistics, the 31-year-old African probably still rates among the top 25 pound-for-pound in the sport,

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Felix Trinidad

Best Boxer
Felix Trinidad

Most Protected
Francisco Castillejo

Is He *Still* Around?
Agustin Caballero

Matchmaker's Dream
Felix Trinidad-Shane Mosley

Deserves A Title Shot
Winky Wright

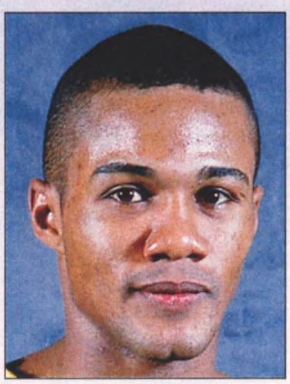
Most Fun To Watch
Fernando Vargas

On The Way Down
Bronco McKart

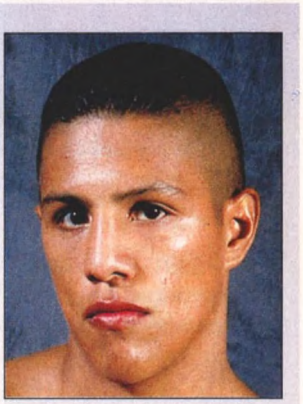
Underrated
Roman Karmazin

Overrated
Harry Simon

Best Fight In 2000
Felix Trinidad KO 12
Fernando Vargas

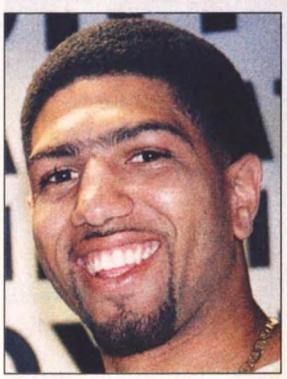


Felix Trinidad



Fernando Vargas

Harry Simon



Winky Wright

based on his competitive showing against Vargas and his debatable loss to De La Hoya.

WELTERWEIGHTS

Thank you, Andrew Lewis. With Oscar De La Hoya planning a move to junior middleweight, it seemed that WBC welterweight champion Sugar Shane Mosley, the most perfect fighting machine on the planet, was going to be left with nobody to test him. We already have one Roy Jones. We don't need another. We needed someone who could threaten Mosley.

Enter "Six Heads" Lewis. With his shockingly dominant seventh-round stoppage of James Page to win the vacant WBA title in February, the southpaw from Guyana let everybody know that Sugar Shane isn't completely safe.

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Shane Mosley becomes welterweight king by topping Oscar De La Hoya

Lewis has speed—not quite as much as Mosley, but enough to have a chance—two-fisted power, skill, and now, exposure. He's still an underdog against Mosley, naturally. But if De La Hoya does depart, Six Heads is far less of an underdog than everybody else.

The only other welterweight being given serious consideration for a showdown with Mosley is Vernon Forrest, who should be annexing the vacant IBF title as soon as he gets his second crack at undeserving Raul Frank. The undefeated Forrest is a guy who does everything well, but doesn't do anything spectacularly enough to make you believe he'll beat Mosley.

There is one more option for Sugar Shane, and, in fact, ESPN2's Max Kellerman recently described it as the best possible fight that can be made in boxing today: Felix Trinidad, at 154 pounds. Mosley wants it, but with Trinidad on his way up to middleweight, don't count on it. It's okay,

WELTERWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Andrew Lewis

Best Boxer
Shane Mosley

Most Protected
Mike Stewart

Is He *Still* Around?
Charles Murray

Matchmaker's Dream
Shane Mosley-Oscar De La Hoya II

Deserves A Title Shot
Thomas Damgaard

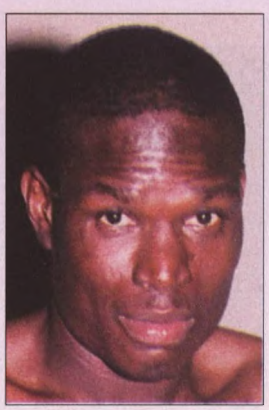
Most Fun To Watch
Shane Mosley

On The Way Down
Derrell Coley

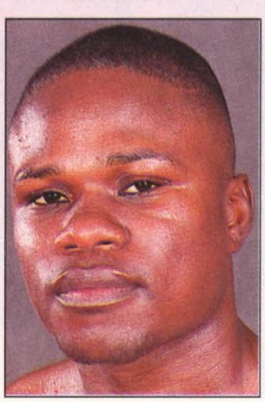
Underrated
Antonio Margarito

Overrated
Hercules Kyvelos

Best Fight In 2000
Shane Mosley W 12
Oscar De La Hoya



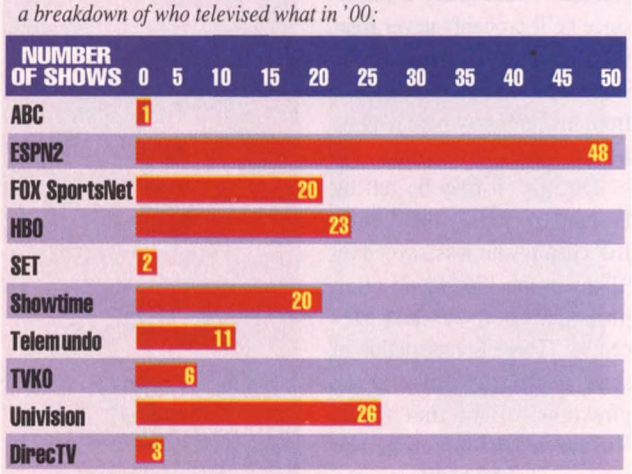
Andrew Lewis



Vernon Forrest

BOXING ON TV

Here's some great news for fight fans: The total number of nationally televised cards rose dramatically in 2000, from 133 the previous year to 160. (The number of boxing shows broadcast on free TV also rose, from zero to one.) Look for this upward trend to continue in 2001, with ESPN2 adding a Tuesday night experiment during the summer, and Showtime launching its bi-weekly ***ShowBox*** *program. Here's a breakdown of who televised what in '00:*



though. We can think of "Six" good reasons why Mosley won't exactly grow bored at welterweight.

Think About It: Talk about guys who came along at the wrong time: Oba Carr and Wilfredo Rivera, the top two veteran warhorses of the welterweight division, have had six world title shots between them, only to fall short time and again because the division's elite truly have been elite in recent years. Carr's three losses have come against De La Hoya, Trinidad, and Ike Quartey. Rivera's four losses have been to De La Hoya, Mosley, and Pernell Whitaker (twice). And right around the time this magazine hits the newsstands, Rivera will probably be adding another loss against the excellent Fernando Vargas. Where are champions like Angel Espada and Tomas Molinares when you need 'em?

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS

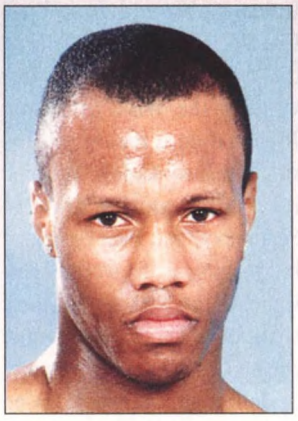
If only every weight class could be like the junior welters. This division is deeper than a cut on Arturo Gatti's eyebrow, and the top guys are fighting each other with the regularity of Mike Tyson's expletives.

In fact, the 140-pounders are poised to become one of only three divisions to become completely unified in the last decade. WBC/WBA champ Kostya Tszyu is going to do battle with IBF titlist Zab Judah, and even if there were no titles at stake, this is one of those fantastic matchups that no true boxing fan would want to miss. Tszyu is a bull-strong veteran, still in his prime at 31. Judah is a cheetah-fast upstart, just entering his prime at 23. They have virtually nothing in common, except a desire to be recognized as the best at 140 pounds.

But they're not alone in that, as the division is rich with hungry contenders. The top tier includes Sharmba Mitchell, the former WBA champ who was battling even-up with Tszyu until his knee gave out, tough and tested Antonio Diaz, gritty Colombian Ener Julio, and flamethrowing Randall Bailey, the man who narrowly lost to Julio last summer. The next tier features former IBF champ Terronn Millett, TV fave "Irish" Micky Ward, crafty and ageless John-John Molina, steel-chinned kayo artist Ben Tackie, CompuBox marvel Ray Oliveira, and, as much as we may hate to admit it, the talented (but not nearly proven enough to be rated as high as he is by some publications) Hector Camacho Jr. There's even a third tier of guys like Diobelys Hurtado, Cory Spinks, Omar Weis, Felix Flores, Antonio Mesquita, Teddy Reid, and Vivian Harris. That's what we call deep.

Think About It: This is the oldest of the "junior" divisions, dating back to 1925, but it doesn't have a very rich history in terms of unification. This title has been splintered since Pedro Adigue claimed the newly created WBC belt in '68, and the only time any two parts of it were unified prior to the Tszyu-Mitchell fight was when Julio Cesar Chavez defeated Meldrick Taylor in '90. The extensive but fractured history of this championship just makes Tszyu-Judah that much more special.

Kostya Tszyu



Zab Judah

Hector Camacho Jr.

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Micky Ward absorbs a left to the gut from Antonio Diaz

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Kostya Tszyu

Best Boxer
Zab Judah

Most Protected
Hector Camacho Jr.

Is He *Still* Around?
Fred Pendleton

Matchmaker's Dream
Kostya Tszyu-Zab Judah

Deserves A Title Shot
Antonio Diaz

Most Fun To Watch
Micky Ward

On The Way Down
Reggie Green

Underrated
John-John Molina

Overrated
Hector Camacho Jr.

Best Fight In 2000
Antonio Diaz W 10
Micky Ward

LIGHTWEIGHTS

There's been a changing of the guard atop the 135-pound class in the past 12 months,

LIGHTWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Jose Luis Castillo

Best Boxer
Stevie Johnston

Most Protected
Leonard Dorin

Is He *Still* Around?
Leavander Johnson

Matchmaker's Dream
Stevie Johnston-Paul Spadafora

Deserves A Title Shot
Stevie Johnston

Most Fun To Watch
Jose Luis Castillo

On The Way Down
Cesar Bazan

Underrated
Emanuel Burton

Overrated
Juan Lazcano

Best Fight In 2000
Takanori Hatakeyama KO 10 Hiroyuki Sakamoto

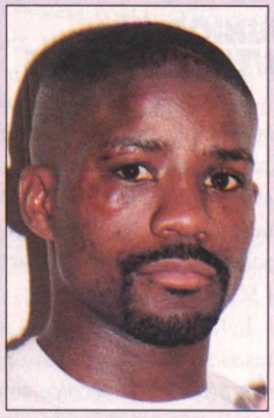
though it didn't come under what you'd call conclusive circumstances. In fact, with the help of just a one-point swing from one judge, Stevie Johnston would still be the man at lightweight, and Jose Luis Castillo might be just a blip in the record books. But after winning the WBC title from Johnston on a majority decision last June, Castillo retained it with a majority draw in September, and then cemented his position as the world's best lightweight with an exciting sixth-round knockout of former champ Cesar Bazan in January.

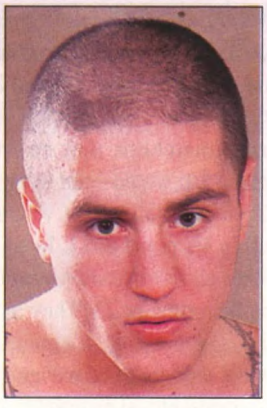
Johnston, meanwhile, is on the comeback trail, and he's taking aim at undefeated IBF titlist Paul Spadafora, who, after a rocky first year as champion, seems to be back on track and ready for more meaningful fights. Many of the other top boxers in this division are foreigners, such as WBA champ Takanori Hatakeyama of Japan, Uzbekistan's Artur Grigorian, Englishman Colin Dunne, and Dominican Victoriano Sosa. But one American sure to make an impact is former 130-pound champ Diego Corrales, even if it's not until sometime in 2002. "Chico" recently plea-bargained his way to probably about a year in jail for domestic abuse, and if his loss to Floyd Mayweather doesn't ruin his confidence, he's capable of becoming the man to beat at 135.

PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

Jose Luis Castillo clocks Cesar Bazan en route to a sixth-round knockout

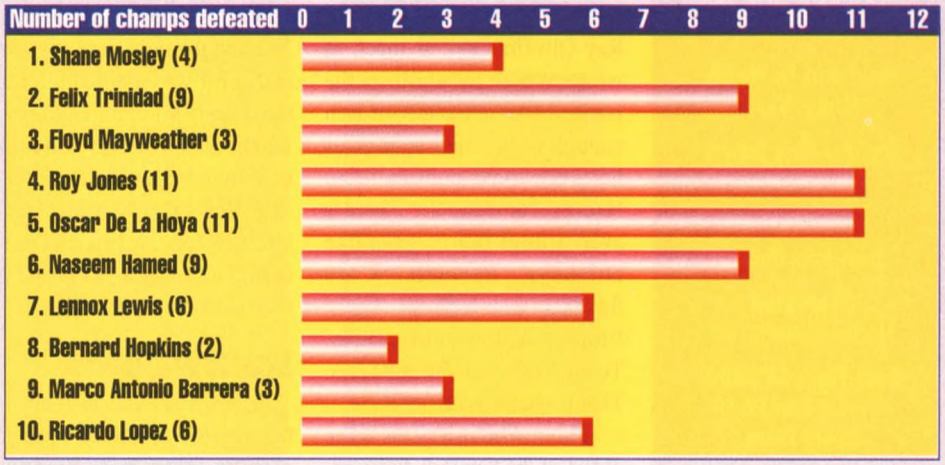
Think About It: Chucky T, David Armstrong, John Lark, Shawn Simmons, Damion Sutten, Larry O'Shields, Jose Vida Ramos, John Bailey, Ruben Oliva, Miguel Arrozal, and Moises Pedroza. Is this the way you prepare for a world title shot? It's the way Billy Irwin prepared—he won 11 straight against this parade of fourth-raters—and his pathetic showing against Spadafora bore the marks of a fighter who wasn't properly readied for the occasion. The guiding of club-fighter Irwin was both a blueprint for how to get a limited slugger a title shot, and for how not to give him a realistic chance when he steps up to the championship level.


Stevie Johnston


Paul Spadafora

CHAMPS vs. CHAMPS

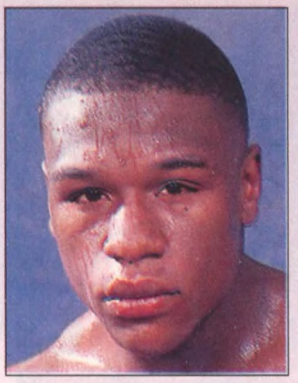
One of the best ways to determine a champion's worth is to count the number of other world champions he's defeated. Here's a look at how THE RING'S pound-for-pound entrants rate in that department:



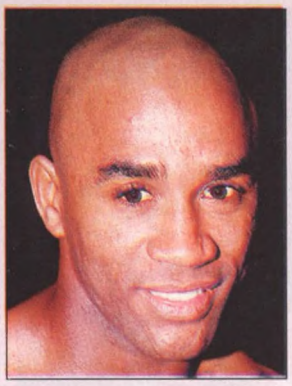
JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS

It's highly cliched to say, "Watch what you wish for, because you just might get it," but the cliche applies to the Floyd Mayweather-Diego Corrales fight on January 20. Hardcore boxing fans were begging for this fight, and they got it, but now a definitive answer has replaced a compelling question, and the junior lightweight division is that much less intriguing as a result.

WBC champ Mayweather looked so untouchable en route to his 10th-round TKO of Corrales, it's almost impossible to envision anyone being competitive with him. Acelino Freitas is an awesome puncher with a pleasing style, but you can't hurt what you can't hit, and Mayweather would handle "Popo" like he did Corrales. WBA titlist Joel Casamayor is doing better as a pro than many expected, but Mayweather would be a step ahead of him in every category. IBF champion Steve Forbes might not have beaten John Brown if it hadn't been for a fluky geyser of blood from Brown's ear, and he surely wouldn't pose any threat to Mayweather.



Floyd Mayweather



Joel Casamayor

Acelino Freitas

Jesus Chavez

The names being bandied about for "Pretty Boy" to fight later this year, Alejandro Gonzalez and Jesus Chavez, are respectable, but can you see either winning a round against Mayweather? Even a bout with Naseem Hamed, as huge as it could be at the box office, is a total mismatch. Mayweather's popularity is back on the upswing, but it might not be that way for long if we can't dig up a dangerous dance partner for him.

Think About It: When Casamayor captured the WBA 130-pound belt last May, he became only the second gold medalist from the '92 Games to win a professional world title (joining Oscar De La Hoya). The '96 Games have produced only two gold medal-winning world champions so far as well, Vassiliy Jirov and David Reid. The list of also-rans from those Olympiads who went on to professional gold is much longer—Tim Austin, Wayne McCullough, Mayweather, Fernando Vargas, Sven Ottke, Eric Morel, etc.—so don't worry too much about the 2000 U.S. team's failure to bring home a gold. The statistics show that Olympic success and pro success don't have much to do with one another anymore.

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Acelino Freitas

Best Boxer
Floyd Mayweather

Most Protected
Luis Navarro

Is He *Still* Around?
Tom Johnson

Matchmaker's Dream
Floyd Mayweather-Naseem Hamed

Deserves A Title Shot
Jesus Chavez

Most Fun To Watch
Acelino Freitas

On The Way Down
Roberto Garcia

Underrated
Tontcho Tontchev

Overrated
Steve Forbes

Best Fight In 2000
Acelino Freitas KO 9 Carlos Rios

FEATHERWEIGHTS

Regardless of who reigns at 126 pounds by the time this magazine hits the newsstands (i.e., who prevails in the Naseem Hamed-Marco Antonio Barrera fight), the one thing that definitely reigns is controversy.

Controversy reigned when Erik Morales captured the WBC belt from Guty Espadas in February, as "El Terrible" turned in the worst performance of his career, barely lasted through the final round, and won a decision that many observers felt should have gone the other way. Controversy also reigned when Derrick "Smoke" Gainer won the WBA title from Fred Norwood last September, as referee Paul Sita lost control of the foul-fest and gave Gainer credit for a knockout when Norwood went down from two blatant low blows and failed to beat Sita's bizarre 13-count. It reigned following Mbulelo Botile's IBF title victory over Paul Ingle in England last December, as the politicians oozed out from behind their desks to call for the abolition of the sport when Ingle

FEATHERWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Naseem Hamed

Best Boxer
Johnny Tapia

Most Protected
Emanuel Lucero

Is He *Still* Around?
Felix Camacho

Matchmaker's Dream
Naseem Hamed-Erik Morales

Deserves A Title Shot
Juan Manuel Marquez

Most Fun To Watch
Naseem Hamed

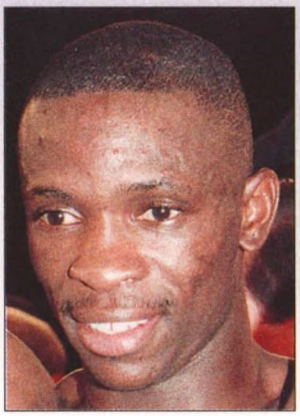
On The Way Down
Angel Vazquez

Underrated
Agapito Sanchez

Overrated
Injin Chi

Best Fight In 2000
Paul Ingle KO 11 Junior Jones

Naseem Hamed



Derrick Gainer

Istvan Kovacs

slipped into a coma (thankfully, he appears to be on his way to a full recovery).

Controversy reigned when HBO wouldn't approve Istvan Kovacs as an opponent for Hamed, and when Hamed gave up his version of the featherweight title to face Barrera rather than Kovacs. And it reigned when Johnny Tapia met Paulie Ayala at featherweight last October, lost a highly disputed decision, and was awarded the vacant (and valueless) IBA title anyway.

Just what the coming year holds is difficult to say with the crucial Hamed-Barrera fight still looming as of press time. But win or lose, "The Prince" isn't going away, so it's safe to say the featherweights will at least remain colorful, if not necessarily as controversial, throughout 2001.

Think About It: Morales' win over Espadas, questionable though it may have been, made him one of only two fighters to beat both Espadas and recently retired Junior Jones. The other: journeyman Daryl Pinckney. In a 60-plus fight career that has seen him defeated by virtually every top junior featherweight and featherweight of the past decade, Pinckney has scored two noteworthy upsets, his third-round stoppage of Jones in '94 and his seventh-round TKO of Espadas in '96. In his entire Hall of Fame career, the great Billy Conn never knocked out a single world champion; Daryl Pinckney knocked out two.

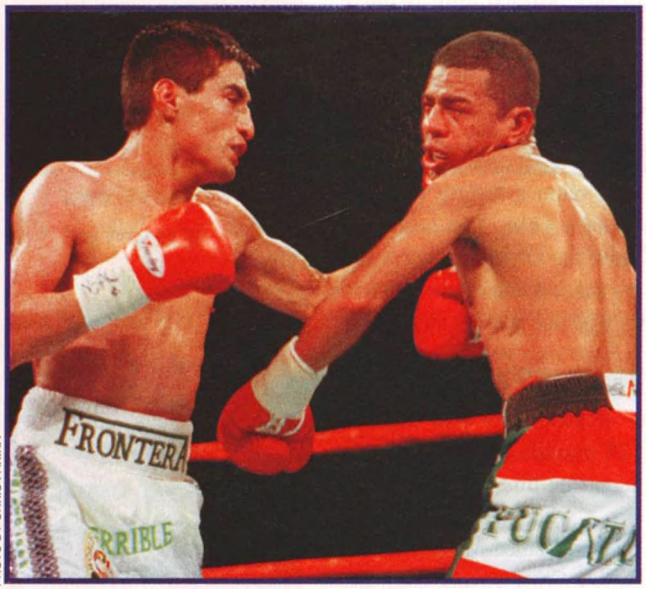


PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Erik Morales jars Guty Espadas with a left

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS

At junior featherweight, a division separated from its neighboring weight classes by just four pounds on either side, there's a lot of coming and going these days, and which fighters are going to settle at 122 pounds is a question nobody can definitively answer. Marco Antonio Barrera, Johnny Tapia, Paulie Ayala, and Mark Johnson, four of the biggest stars in the lower weight classes, could all be junior feathers by the time you read this. Or, perhaps, none of them will be.

Barrera, of course, had his megafight with Naseem Hamed looming as we went to press, and the outcome of that featherweight fight could determine whether he returns to 122 pounds. Tapia, who last fought at a catchweight of 124 pounds in his October '00 rematch with Ayala, may trim off another 32 ounces and campaign as a junior feather. Ayala, a natural bantamweight, is planning to come up to 122 for a June fight with WBA champ Bones Adams, and if he wins, would presumably stay at this weight to defend the title. And Johnson, fresh out of prison and inactive since November '99, could land just about anywhere between bantam and feather.

There are also some quality guys we *know* are junior feathers, most notably Adams, whose revival has been nothing short of remarkable. South African IBF champ Lehlo Ledwaba is receiving rave reviews, though he has yet to fight on American TV. And other solid fighters like WBC champ Willie Jorrin, Nestor Garza, Enrique Sanchez, Michael Brodie, Oscar Larios, and Danny Romero make this an interesting weight class, regardless of whether the stars land here.

Think About It: We've seen countless fighters go from world-class to washed-up as a result of a single beating, but

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Marco Antonio Barrera

Best Boxer
Marco Antonio Barrera

Most Protected
Danny Romero

Is He *Still* Around?
Victor Rabanales

Matchmaker's Dream
Marco Antonio Barrera-Paulie Ayala

Deserves A Title Shot
Michael Brodie

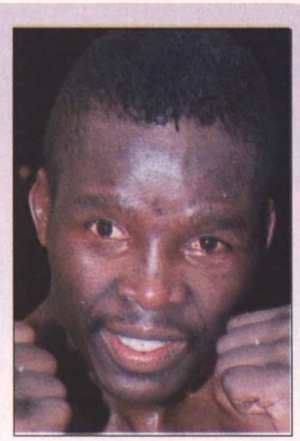
Most Fun To Watch
Marco Antonio Barrera

On The Way Down
Jesus Salud

Underrated
Carlos Contreras

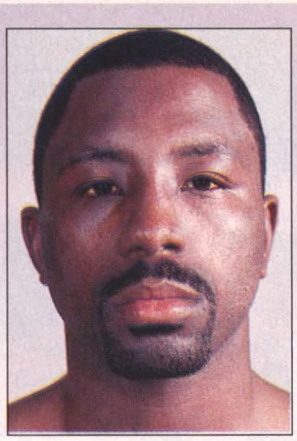
Overrated
Willie Jorrin

Best Fight In 2000
Erik Morales W 12
Marco Antonio Barrera



Lehlo Ledwaba

Willie Jorrin



Mark Johnson

perhaps nobody in recent years fits this description better than Reynante Jamili. You may remember the Filipino from his July '99 challenge of then-WBC 122-pound champ Erik Morales, when he looked credible on his way to having a 21-fight win streak snapped via sixth-round TKO. But since then, Jamili's career has taken a drastic nosedive, the Morales fight appearing to have taken all of the proverbial starch out of him. A two-round knockout loss to Manny Pacquiao was followed by a three-round kayo defeat to Juan Manuel Marquez, and in his most recent outing, Jamili was flattened in two rounds by Japanese prospect Manabu Fukushima. How do you say "retirement" in Filipino?

BANTAMWEIGHTS

The way he's wasting away, IBF bantamweight champion Tim Austin ought to be able to make the strawweight limit by now. From the moment he won the title in July '97 with a dramatic come-from-behind stoppage of the excellent Mbulelo Botile, Austin was touted as the future of the bantamweight class, a boxer-puncher destined to become the best American 118-pounder since Jeff Chandler. But the promise hasn't been fulfilled, because Austin has hardly fought, and when he has, the opposition has been second-rate. Whoever's to blame—Don King, Carl King, Austin himself—"The Cincinnati Kid" is suffering as a result. April 14 marked his 30th birthday, and if he is going to be the future of the bantamweight division, the future *needs* to arrive in 2001.

Meanwhile, the inactive Austin has been supplanted atop THE RING'S 118-pound rankings by WBA champ Paulie Ayala, who himself only made one title defense in 2000—a decision win over Johnny Bredahl—but also moved up in weight temporarily to repeat his 1999 Fight of the Year win over Johnny Tapia. There was talk of a unification bout between Ayala and Austin, but that talk seems to have subsided, and, as noted in the junior feather section, Ayala may be moving up in weight.

The forgotten titlist, at least in America, is WBC king Veerapol Sahaprom, whose only loss came in his fifth pro fight, when he was defending the WBA bantam title he'd won in his fourth pro fight. The powerful Thailander has been busier than Ayala or Austin, but has been enjoying soft touches his last couple times out.

Think About It: Did anyone in the sport face a tougher schedule over the past year or so than Adan Vargas? Arguments can be made for Felix Trinidad, Fernando Vargas, or Diego Corrales, but look at what this 118-pound Mexican workhorse has done: He went to the tilted soil of Thailand to lose a 12-round decision to WBC champ Sahaprom, decisioned former world champion Mauricio Pastrana, decisioned tough Ivan Alvarez, and then decisioned former world champ Jorge Eliecer Julio. That's 48 rounds of combat against opponents who brought a combined record of 107-8 (74) to the dance. That's more rounds, in fact, than IBF champ Austin has fought in the last *five years*.

BANTAMWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Tim Austin

Best Boxer
Paulie Ayala

Most Protected
Tim Austin

Is He *Still* Around?
Francisco Tejedor

Matchmaker's Dream
Paulie Ayala-Tim Austin

Deserves A Title Shot
Adan Vargas

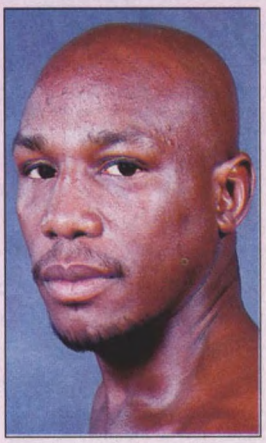
Most Fun To Watch
Paulie Ayala

On The Way Down
Arthur Johnson

Underrated
Hugo Dianzo

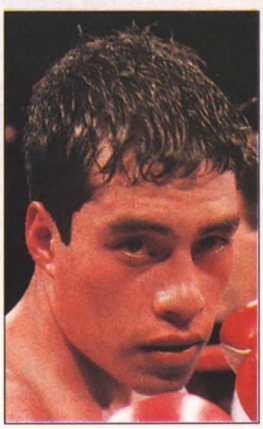
Overrated
Mauricio Martinez

Best Fight In 2000
Mauricio Martinez KO 5 Lester Fuentes



Tim Austin

Paulie Ayala



Adan Vargas

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS

The smaller weight classes traditionally tend to be dominated by foreign fighters, and that's never been more obvious than with the junior bantam class right now. "The State Of The Game" is now in its 11th year as an annual RING feature, and for the previous 10 years, there was always at least one American in our junior bantam top 10. But not this year. In fact, none of the three major governing bodies have a single American anywhere in their ratings either, unless you count Vernie Torres, who lives and fights in the States, but is actually from the Philippines.

But just because the average American fan isn't familiar with the fighters in this class, that doesn't mean there aren't any quality pugilists here. WBC champ Masamori Tokuyama, the first North Korean ever to hold a world title, is slick, clever, and seasoned, and should be applauded by fight fans in the Far East for removing the ever-boring In Joo Cho from the throne. IBF titlist Felix Machado of Venezuela is a solid all-around fighter who impressed in his two outings (the first one televised by Showtime) against respectable Julio Gamboa. And WBA king Celes Kobayashi is a constantly improving Japanese southpaw who dominated miracle

In Joo Cho fires a right at Joel Luna

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Leo Gamez

Best Boxer
Masamori Tokuyama

Most Protected
Alex Ali Baba

Is He *Still* Around?
Julio Coronel

Matchmaker's Dream
Masamori Tokuyama-Celes Kobayashi

Deserves A Title Shot
Samson Toyota-Thailand

Most Fun To Watch
Leo Gamez

On The Way Down
Julio Gamboa

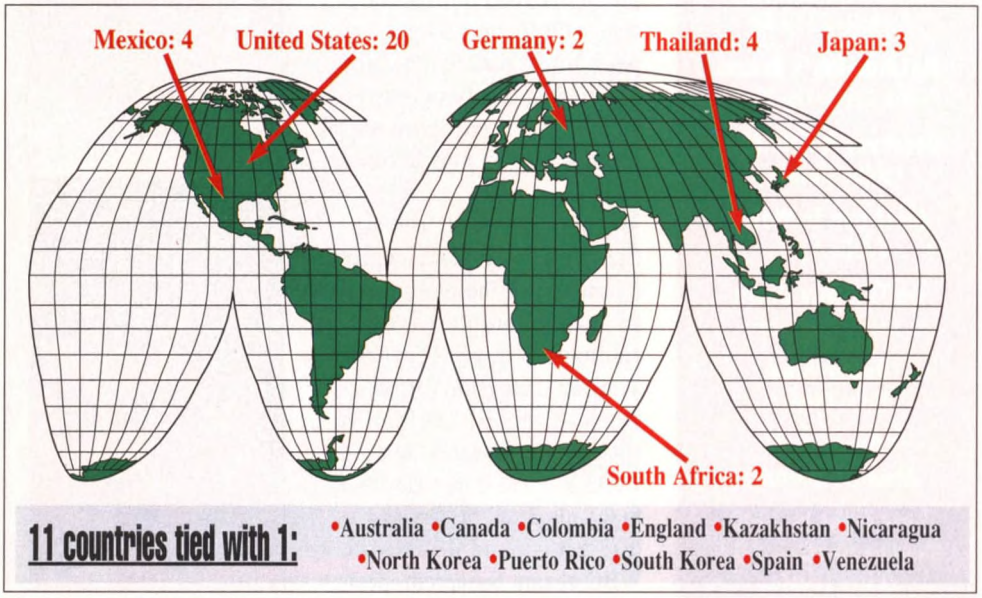
Underrated
Gerry Penalosa

Overrated
Akihiko Nago

Best Fight In 2000
Hideki Todaka KO 11 Yokthai Sithoar

THE CHAMPS BY COUNTRIES

It's not exactly a quantum leap, but the United States' tally of world champions has increased by two since last year, despite the fact that the total number of champions has decreased due to vacancies and partial unifications. (Champions as of March 12, 2001)



Gerry Penalosa

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Felix Machado takes a right from Julio Gamboa

man Leo Gamez and knocked him out in the 10th round to claim the belt in March.

Add in former world champs such as Gamez, Cho, Todaka, Gerry Penalosa, Jesus Rojas, and Mauricio Pastrana, plus up-and-comers like Adonis Rivas of Nicaragua and unbeaten former Mexican Olympian Martin Castillo, and you realize this division isn't all that weak. At least not outside the U.S.

Think About It: The WBA belt, once worn with such pride and stability by Hall of Famer Khaosai Galaxy, has now changed hands at least once in each of the last eight years. The longest reign during that time span was 16 months, by Yokthai Sithoar of Thailand.

FLYWEIGHTS

How can you call a guy "Little Hands Of Steel" when he hasn't scored a knockout in seven fights? It's a perplexing question, but then everything about WBA titlist Eric Morel inside the ring is perplexing. How can the fighter who looked so special against Rodolfo Blanco, Francisco Espitia, and Sornpichai Pisnurachank look so average against Miguel Granados, Alberto Ontiveros, and Gilberto Keb-Baas? One minute he's slashing and scoring like Michael Jordan; the next minute he's dancing and yelping like Michael Jackson. We know this much about the undefeated '96 Olympian: He has the talent to be a star. But until Morel starts using that talent with some consistency, he'll have to accept the fact that being a champion and being an attraction are two different things.

Speaking of accepting facts, accepting the fact that IBF champ Irene Pacheco got the decision in his November 2000 battle with Hawk Makepula wasn't easy. The South African challenger seemed to have done enough to win by a small margin, but one of the judges somehow saw Pacheco winning by eight points. Fortunately, a rematch to their entertaining battle is in the works.

Rounding out the list of champions in this division is Pongsaklek Wonjongkam of Thailand. Whereas Morel and Pacheco have both become ESPN2 regulars, Pongsaklek is an absolute unknown in America, but the way he won the WBC title in March makes us want to get familiar with him. With a three-knockdown assault in the first round, the 23-year-old crushed previously unbeaten Malcolm Tunacao to capture the belt and our attention.

Think About It: In the last five years, three Americans have held a world flyweight title: Danny Romero, Mark Johnson, and Morel. But in the 60 years before Romero's victory over Francisco Tejedor, not a single Yank wore the 112-pound crown. The last one prior to this recent triumvirate was Philadelphia's Midget Wolgast, who held a share of the title from 1930 to '35.

FLYWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Pongsaklek Wonjongkam

Best Boxer
Eric Morel

Most Protected
Zoltan Lunka

Is He *Still* Around?
Paulino Villalobos

Matchmaker's Dream
Eric Morel-Irene Pacheco

Deserves A Title Shot
Hawk Makepula

Most Fun To Watch
Hawk Makepula

On The Way Down
Sornpichai Pisnurachank

Underrated
Alejandro Montiel

Overrated
Damaen Kelly

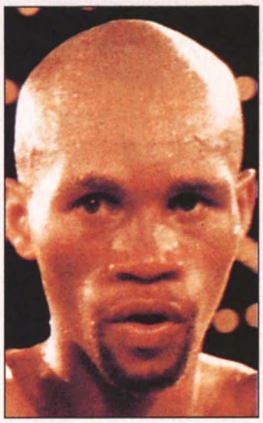
Best Fight In 2000
Irene Pacheco W 12
Hawk Makepula

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS

What does the number 49 mean to you? To a football fan, it means Joe Montana, Jerry Rice, and the best team of the 1980s. To a racing fan, it means Dale Earnhardt's age forever. To a math major, it simply means seven squared. And to a boxing fan, it means Rocky Marciano, who retired nearly a half-century ago with a flawless 49-0 record.

Eric Morel

Irene Pacheco



Hawk Makepula

But that's not all it means to a boxing fan. The number 49 now refers also to IBF junior flyweight champion Ricardo Lopez, the Hall-of-Fame-bound half-pint who, by returning from a 14-month layoff with a third-round knockout of Ratanapol Vorapin last December, ran his unbeaten mark to 49-0-1 (36). That technical draw against

WHAT'S IN, WHAT'S OUT

IN	OUT
Sugar Shane	Reluctant Roy
Don King	Bob Arum
Mark Beiro on *Battlebots*	Michael Buffer on WCW *Monday Nitro*
Wladimir Klitschko	Vitaly Klitschko
Frank Garza	Nestor Garza
Sunday afternoon fights on Univision	Saturday afternoon fights on HBO
Floyd vs. Roger	Floyd vs. Floyd
"Six Heads"	"Li'l Hagler"
Booing David Tua	Booing Richard Steele
ShowBox	*ThunderBox*
Francisco Bojado	Francisco Castillejo
Vegas decisions for Erik Morales	Vegas decisions for Oscar De La Hoya

Rosendo Alvarez in '98 does impinge upon the glossiness of Lopez' resume a bit, but 49 wins without a loss is still a remarkable stat.

The question is whether Lopez will retire with that zero in his record, as Marciano did. If "El Finito" keeps on fighting at his once-a-year pace, he has a shot. But if he's in the mood for a challenge, there's plenty out there in the 108-pound division. The number-two man in this weight class is WBC titlist Yosam Choi, who further proved himself with a dominant seventh-round knockout of former champ Saman Sorjaturong in January. Reigning WBA champion Alvarez nearly beat Lopez in their two previous encounters, and former champ Pichit C. Siriwat, who was stripped of the WBA title, not beaten for it, is a tough, powerful southpaw. With ever-improving Jorge Arce and former IBF minimumweight champ Zolani Petelo also in the picture, Lopez' "O" might just go before he does.

Think About It: We often hear about how the cruiserweight division is supposed to be a breeding ground for future heavyweights (even if most of those cruisers don't succeed at heavyweight). Along the same lines, the strawweight division is turning out to be quite a breeding ground for future junior flyweights, as there are five former 105-pound world champions currently campaigning at 108, and most of them are significant players. There's Lopez, of course, his old rival

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Ricardo Lopez

Best Boxer
Ricardo Lopez

Most Protected
Koki Tanaka

Is He *Still* Around?
Melchor Cob-Castro

Matchmaker's Dream
Ricardo Lopez-
Rosendo Alvarez III

Deserves A Title Shot
Pichit C. Siriwat

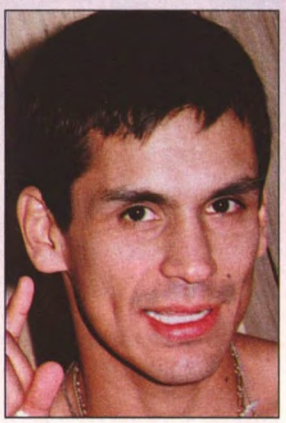
Most Fun To Watch
Ricardo Lopez

On The Way Down
Ratanapol Vorapin

Underrated
Jorge Arce

Overrated
Hidenobu Honda

Best Fight In 2000
Pichit C. Siriwat W 12
Sangik Yang



Ricardo Lopez

Zolani Petelo

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Andy Tabanas and Fahlan Sakkreerin fought to a draw in February

Alvarez, the talented Petelo, Thailand's Fahlan Sakkreerin, and recent Lopez victim Vorapin. Of the five, only the faded Vorapin isn't in the thick of the championship picture.

STRAWWEIGHTS

The WBC calls them strawweights. The WBA calls them minimumweights. The IBF calls them mini flyweights. But it doesn't matter which of those names you like best, because pretty soon we'll all be calling them irrelevantweights.

Since Ricardo Lopez departed this division two years ago, it's been lacking a name fighter. But at least it had a somewhat established titleholder in South Africa's Zolani Petelo, who made five successful defenses of the IBF belt between '97 and '00. Not anymore. Petelo elected this past winter to give up the title and campaign at 108 pounds. That leaves Mexico's Jose Antonio Aguirre, who won the WBC title in February '00, as the top dog at this weight, and probably the least accomplished top dog in any weight in the sport.

Not that Aguirre's a bad fighter; he decisioned Wandee Singwangcha to win the title, has made two defenses (against third-rate opposition, unfortunately), and only has one loss on his record. But he has a long way to go before he makes anyone forget about Lopez—or remember about the strawweights.

The WBA champ, Keitaro Hoshino, has an interesting story. He lost five of his first 11 fights, three by knockout, before slowly working his way up the ladder and becoming, at age 31, the oldest man ever to win a 105-pound title. The light-hitting Japanese veteran decisioned one-dimensional Joma Gamboa last December, but a relatively strong list of challengers—the WBA's top five contenders are all rated in THE RING's top 10—should make his reign a brief one. Still, with the IBF title vacant, and with nobody else in this division making waves, Hoshino is the number-two guy in this increasingly uninteresting weight class.

Think About It: You see their names in our ratings every month, but since they've never fought outside of Asia, you probably know very little about Chana and Songkram Porpaoin. Maybe you know Chana held the WBA minimumweight title from '93 to '95. Maybe you know Songkram challenged unsuccessfully for that same title in '97. And you probably deduced that they're brothers. But did you know that they are, in fact, twins? If Songkram should ever manage to win a world title (he's currently ranked seventh by the WBA), the Porpaoins would become only the second set of twin titlists in boxing history, joining fellow Thailanders Khaosai and Khaokor Galaxy. ■

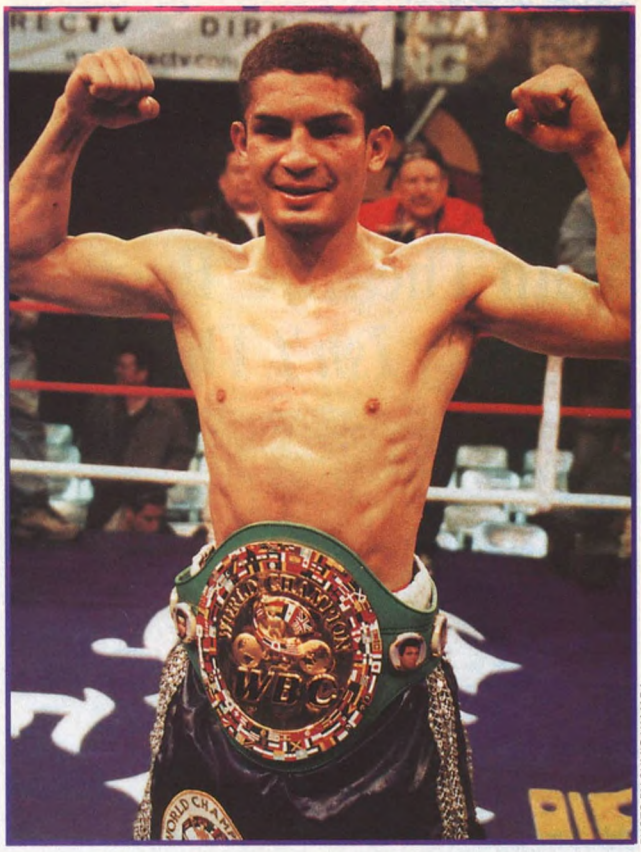
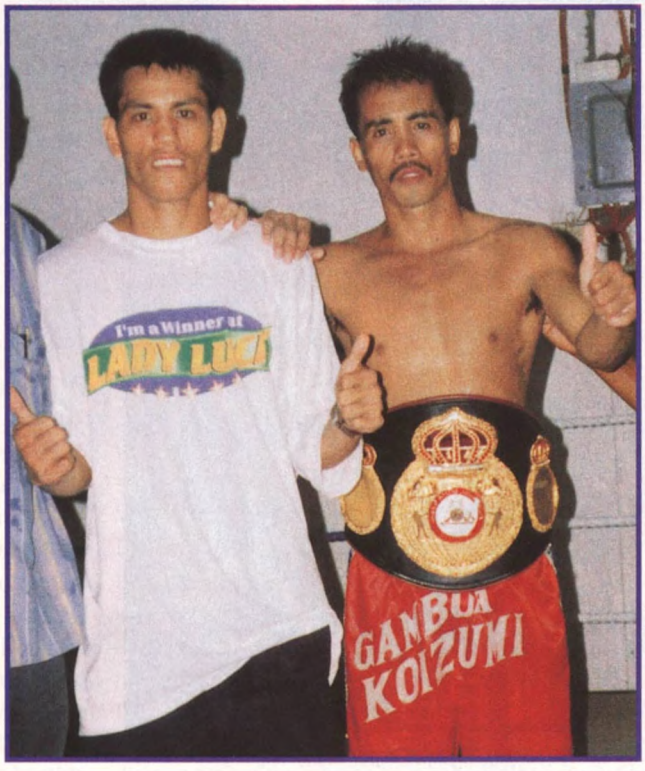


PHOTO BY SUMIO YAMADA

Jose Antonio Aguirre



Former WBA minimum champ Joma Gamboa (right) poses with former flyweight titlist Malcolm Tunacao

STRAWWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Jose Antonio Aguirre

Best Boxer
Keitaro Hoshino

Most Protected
Yutaka Niida

Is He *Still* Around?
Nico Thomas

Matchmaker's Dream
Jose Antonio Aguirre-Keitaro Hoshino

Deserves A Title Shot
Kermin Guardia

Most Fun To Watch
Joma Gamboa

On The Way Down
Osvaldo Guerrero

Underrated
Hiroshi Nakajima

Overrated
Joma Gamboa

Best Fight In 2000
Joma Gamboa W 12
Noel Arambulet

A BULL MARKET FOR BRITISH BOXING

With The BBC Back On Board, The Sky *Isn't* The Limit!

PHOTO BY FRANK VITUCCI

PHOTO BY JOHN GICHIGI/ALLSPORT

With world heavyweight champion Lennox Lewis (above), Olympic super heavyweight gold medalist Audley Harrison (above right), and featherweight superstar Naseem Hamed (far right) leading the way, boxing is bigger than ever in Great Britain.

By Brian Doogan

The "feel good factor" currently pervading British boxing has much to do with territorial claims on the world heavyweight championship, intellectual property rights to the inimitable Naseem Hamed, and the beginning of Audley Harrison's voyage from Olympic super heavyweight gold toward the towering position occupied now by Lennox Lewis. Whether Harrison will be blown off course before re-establishing the British succession to sport's richest prize remains to be seen. But Lewis and Hamed are the primal figures in their domain, dominant rulers whose careers are approaching their crowning moments.

As this issue went to press, Hamed was preparing in Palm Springs, California, for what he described as "the defining fight of my career" against Marco Antonio Barrera, one half of the Mexican double act that provided the most compelling bout of last year, a maelstrom of magnificent tumult. The other, Erik Morales, is waiting in the wings. Victory over both Mexican warriors would secure Hamed's legacy. A Hall of Fame induction would then be a formality for one of the finest featherweights of all-time and one of the everlasting characters of the ring.

George Clooney, of *ER* fame, and film director Steven Soderbergh have reportedly spent months wooing Lewis and Mike Tyson to stage a fake fight in *Ocean's Eleven*, their adaptation of the 1960s Rat Pack film. Later this year, the two biggest names in heavyweight boxing will almost

Lewis' two fights with Evander Holyfield earned him recognition as the world's best heavyweight and made him England's first undisputed heavyweight champion in more than 100 years. Lewis' urging also helped persuade the BBC to return boxing to free TV in Britain for the first time in many years.

surely fight for real, a Hollywood-like climax to world heavyweight champion Lewis' oft-overshadowed career. The Tyson aura is no longer what it once was—fearsome, overwhelming, a throwback to the mean, raw menace of Jack Dempsey and Sonny Liston. But he still inspires a frightening fixation. For Lewis, he provides perfect closure.

To beat the man-monster of the ring in what could well be his last fight would preserve him in myth somewhere not far short of St. George, England's eulogized dragon slayer. Historically, it will leave him the master of the three heavyweights who stood out in his era: Tyson, Riddick Bowe, and Evander Holyfield. Bowe never faced Lewis as a professional, preferring to dump the WBC belt in a garbage can rather than defend it against him, but the New Yorker was soundly beaten when they clashed in the 1988 Olympic super heavyweight final in Seoul. Holyfield, a bronze medalist at light heavyweight in the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles and a golden embodiment of resolution and reconstruction as a pro, summoned his warrior spirit through two encounters with Lewis before the 35-year-old Londoner emerged as undisputed champion.

And now Tyson. The destructive danger may not be as definitive, but the 34-year-old former undisputed champion retains sufficient firepower to remain a threat and enough notoriety to leave him vying with King Kong for the title of the baddest baddie ever to roam the streets of New York.

Terrestrial television channels in Britain, lured by the potential viewing figures to be generated by a sport perennially dependent on its star attractions, are beginning to vie again with satellite and cable competitors for broadcast rights to boxing's big bouts and even to amateur events like the World Amateur Championships, which take place in Belfast this summer. Harrison's gold medal success in Sydney attracted a large audience on BBC Television and persuaded BBC Director General Greg Dyke to secure the 29-year-old Londoner to an exclusive deal through his first 10 pro fights. The live broadcast rights to Lewis' April 21 defense of his WBC and IBF titles against Hasim Rahman from Johannesburg, South Africa, were secured by BBC1, and the BBC is determined to be involved in the screening of Lewis-Tyson. Boxing's return to free television in Britain is a massive shot in the arm for a sport continually characterized as being on legs more unsteady than your average opponent of Lewis or Tyson.

"Lennox challenged me to bring big-time boxing back to the BBC when he was our Sports Personality of the Year in 1999, and this is now happening," said BBC Director of Sports Peter Salmon. "We are happy and confident that we will increase the audience to boxing. Lennox is a massive global personality, an inspiration to millions around the world because of the perseverance, hard work, determination, hunger, and, most of all, patience he has shown in getting to where he is today—the

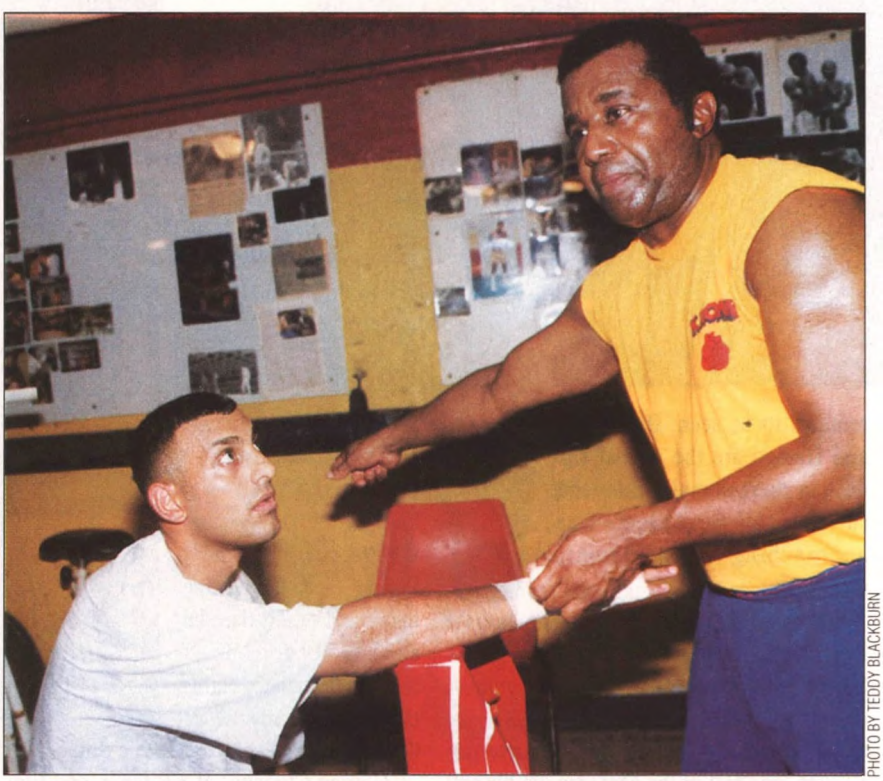


PHOTO BY TEDDY BLACKBURN

Hall of Fame trainer Emanuel Steward, pictured wrapping Hamed's hands, opened up a new Kronk Gym in London in February. Steward predicted that the gym would help to produce four Olympic gold medalists for England in the next eight years.

pinnacle of his profession. The audience he will be able to attract with us may be up to 10 times that of a satellite or cable audience."

Even Hamed seeks such exposure. His association with satellite and cable broadcaster Sky TV—which has one more fight to run before their present deal expires—has been hugely beneficial, but the 27-year-old realizes it may have hurt his larger projection as one of the most extravagant talents in British sport, eclipsed only by Manchester United soccer player David Beckham.

"I do regret that in the biggest way," Hamed acknowledged. "The whole of Britain should know of me and see me fight. But Sky has been good for me. You have to do the best for you and your family to live your life, and my chips are still stacking. I see that Audley and Lennox are now with the BBC, and if the BBC wants to do the same with me, then you never know. I'm watched in 121 countries around the world and I want as many people as possible to see me fight."

Attendances at shows around the country are for the most part high, and the number of participants is climbing. There are more amateur boxers in Britain than at any point in the last 10 years. Kronk, the name synonymous with the assembly line of boxing excellence in the Motor City of Detroit, has even opened a new base in London, and Emanuel Steward, Kronk's patriarch and the trainer of Lewis and co-trainer of Hamed, has vowed to produce four British gold medalists over the next two Olympic Games to follow in the footsteps of Lewis and Harrison.

"Good boxers boxing with good boxers—that's what Kronk is all about," Steward said to mark the official opening of the gym, which was attended by Marvelous Marvin Hagler and his co-conspirator in perhaps the greatest three-round war in fistic history, Tommy Hearns. "By 2008, after the next two Olympics, I hope to have developed four gold medal winners."

Hearns spoke eloquently and passionately.

"I've seen here today how Kronk was born and where Kronk is going. I never dreamed we'd make it this far," he said. "Emanuel taking Kronk here will give kids in Britain the opportunity to be what they want to be. The kids who come in here will be off the streets doing something that will benefit their lives whether they make it as fighters or not, and at all times they'll be watched over. The wonderful thing is that the gym here will give people somewhere to go and something to do. That's what we're all looking for in life, places to go and things to do."

Hagler echoed the sentiments of his former foe.

"The young people who come here will be happy, excited, inspired," he said. "You've got to have a dream in life, and it's important to feel you are in a place where you belong."

Someone who has demonstrated he belongs in the ring as naturally as Nureyov belonged on the dance stage is Alex Arthur, a 22-year-old featherweight from Edinburgh, Scotland, who—after two professional fights—is already being talked about as the new Ken Buchanan, the former world lightweight champion inducted into the Hall of Fame last year. Following an accomplished amateur career that reached its zenith with victory in the 1998 Commonwealth Games, Arthur stopped Londoner Richmond Assante in

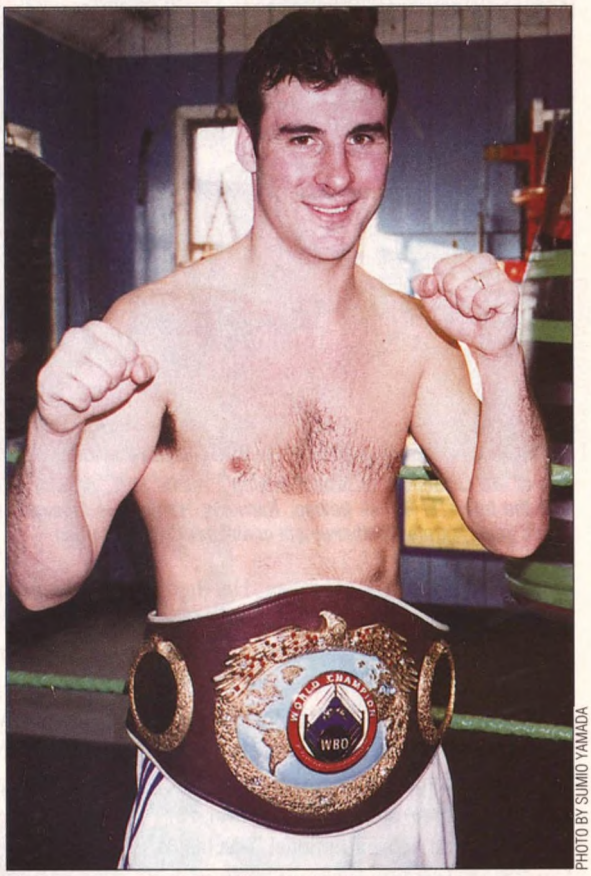


PHOTO BY SUMIO YAMADA

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Undefeated Welshman Joe Calzaghe (top) is perceived by many as the world's top super middleweight, a claim likely supported by Englishman Richie Woodhall, who was kayoed by Calzaghe in 10 rounds last December in Sheffield (above).

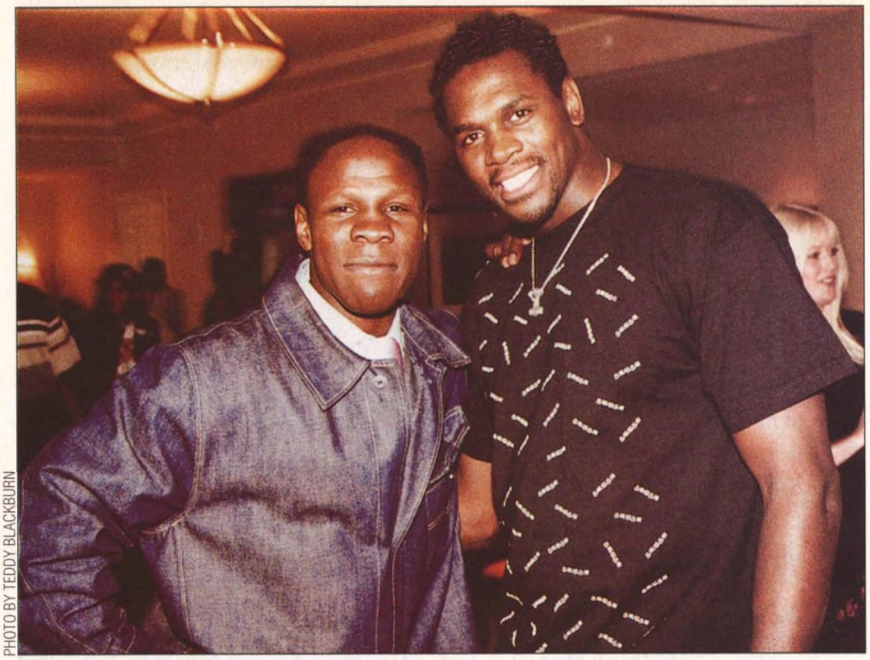


PHOTO BY TEDDY BLACKBURN

One of the superstars of British boxing's recent past, popular middleweight Chris Eubank, poses with the future of British boxing, Harrison. Harrison is managed by another top British fighter of recent years, former featherweight contender Colin McMillan.

his pro debut last November. He then removed Manchester's Eddie Nevins with more explosive punching in the opening round to win his second fight on a night when fellow prospect Michael Gomez, allegedly weakened by the flu, was exposed by Hungarian Laszlo Bognar.

"I've known about Alex Arthur for some time, and he's exceptional," declared former world featherweight champion Barry McGuigan. "He has good moves, a tremendous variety of punches, and he hits hard to the body. He's got great potential."

Joe Calzaghe also has the potential to exert control over the world's super middleweights, as he proved emphatically with a 10th-round stoppage of former WBC titleholder Richie Woodhall last December. It was a persuasive winning performance, but it was overshadowed by the devastating defeat suffered by Paul Ingle against South African Mbulelo Botile that forced the Scarborough fighter to be stretchered from the Sheffield ring and straight onto the operating table. The 28-year-old Ingle, who lost the IBF featherweight title, but was fortunate not to lose something far more precious after developing a blood clot on his brain, is making a good recovery. Boxing, we may believe, is in the midst of a renaissance in Britain, but the reality of a brutal trade can make this a precarious assumption.

Men like Colin McMillan help us to keep the faith. A pioneering professional because of the manner in which he retained complete control of his career by remaining self-managed throughout while taking advice from the journalist Jonathan Rendall, McMillan had the fluid movement of Sugar Ray Leonard. He would have accomplished much more than the winning of the spurious WBO featherweight title had it not been for the badly dislocated shoulder he suffered during his first defense, against Colombian Ruben Palacio in September 1992, which led ultimately to his cruelly premature retirement in 1997 when barely 30. McMillan has seven O-Levels and three A-Levels (the equivalent of commendable high school results) and represents the educated face of professional boxing, just like university graduate Harrison, who has appointed "Sweet C" as his manager. McMillan is optimistic about the sport's future.

British promoter Frank Warren recently signed a deal with Showtime to provide a large part of the programming for ShowBox, Showtime's new bi-weekly boxing series, which will be shown on Saturday nights in America.

"The return of boxing to terrestrial television, the exploits of Lennox, Naseem, and now Audley, and the tremendous work done by Sky Television in its projection of boxing will, I'm sure, bring more young blood into the sport to safeguard its future," said McMillan, still trim and handsome with an ever-engaging, effusive smile that accompanies his bright, intelligent features. "Boxing in this country was becoming marginalized, but Audley's Olympic success has helped in restoring it to the back pages of newspapers, and, of course, Lennox and Naz have done a lot to ensure this too. Boxing has unique appeal. To succeed in it requires the perfect synchronization of body, mind, and spirit, and that is its fascination. There is a definite upsurge in interest in the sport."

If the men at the top are primarily responsible, those farther down the scale are not merely making up the numbers. Damon Hague, a reformed drugs user whose extracurricular activities inevitably led to a stretch of detention at Her Majesty's pleasure, is unbeaten at super middleweight and skilled in the art of self-promotion. He regularly sells out venues in his hometown of Derby that accommodate up to 1,000 seats, 900 of which he distributes singlehandedly by parading himself before the crowds at his local soccer and ice hockey clubs.

"He's a promoter's dream," said Brendan Ingle, in whose gym Hague is trained by Ingle's sons Jon and Dominic.

They call him the king of the small halls, and his contribution is as crucial as that of Lennox Lewis, the undisputed king of the hill. ■

Brian Doogan is THE RING'S European correspondent.

International Boxing Hall of Fame - Canastota, New York

ANNUAL INDUCTION WEEKEND JUNE 7-10, 2001

★ A Championship Weekend in Boxing's Hometown ★

BANQUET OF CHAMPIONS

Rivalries . . . Alexis Arguello and Aaron Pryor exchange friendly words about their classic fights.

FIST CASTING

Everlasting . . . A fist cast by Sugar Ray Leonard.

PARADE OF CHAMPIONS

Marvelous . . . Marvin Hagler waves to fans.

Perfect 10. . . Hollywood star Bo Derek greets parade spectators.

CELEBRITY BOXING NIGHT

Fight Night . . . Hector "Macho" Camacho featured in action-packed bouts at Turning Stone Casino Resort.

5K RACE, FUN RUN

Road Work . . . Bernard Hopkins (l) in stride while Livingstone Bramble (r) crosses finish line.

Go . . . Ken Norton officially starts race of celebrity boxers and runners.

INDUCTION CEREMONY

A Moment in Time . . . Joltin' Jeff Chandler (l) gives acceptance speech while Ken Buchanan (r) poses in Museum moments before Induction Ceremony.

BOXING CARD SHOW

A Collector's Dream . . . Boxing memorabilia for fans. The world's only all-boxing show draws collectors from throughout the world.

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Marvelous . . . Marvin Hagler (l) autographs golf bag and Juan LaPorte (r) poses with golfers.

VIP COCKTAIL RECEPTION

Stars . . . Marvelous Marvin Hagler and Hector "Macho" Camacho pose for reception guests, while Carlos Ortiz (r) makes the rounds.

WORKOUT SESSIONS

Bernard Hopkins and Sugar Shane Mosley work out for the public on Museum Grounds.

RINGSIDE TALKS

Reminiscing. . . Bert Sugar interviews Hall of Famer Joey Giradello.

Yes! Please send me a brochure of the Schedule of Events and ticket information

Name _____

Address _____

_____

Phone _____

International Boxing Hall of Fame

PO Box 425 • Canastota, NY 13032

Call: 315-697-7095

or Fax: 315-697-5356

JOHN RUIZ WINS HIS FIVE-YEAR MARATHON

"Yesterday's Nobody Became Today's Somebody"

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Ruiz and head trainer Norman Stone celebrate the unanimous decision victory over Holyfield. The upset win not only earned Ruiz the WBA heavyweight title, it also helped erase the doubts that had been attached to him ever since his kayo loss to David Tua five years ago.

By Ted Bodenrader

It is two decades later, but the name still rips through the heart of the historical sports city of Boston, releasing a stench everywhere it is echoed. The name is Ruiz, and for anyone who's ever heard it in these parts, it's a byword for cheating, lying, and blatant deception. It's become a constant reminder of everything that is wrong in organized sports, an ugly stain that one woman has found impossible to erase some 20 years later.

Throughout New England, they still speak of Rosie Ruiz as if her infamous sports scandal happened just last week, and not back in the 1980, when the road runner cut more than just a few corners to deceitfully claim the women's crown in the Boston Marathon.

But now, the name Ruiz has resurfaced once again. It has returned not only throughout this sports-crazed town, but throughout every city where they talk about competing for titles and trophies and a thing called glory. But this time the name has a surprisingly positive connotation, because instead of being the last name of a con artist, it is the last name of John Ruiz, the new WBA heavyweight champion.

Still, although this Ruiz may be 20 years and 100 pounds removed from the other one, before he beat Evander Holyfield in their March 3 rematch, accusations of a similar nature were slung at the Beantown banger. They said that Ruiz' arrival at the top of the WBA heavyweight ratings was done in much

the same unethical fashion as Rosie's phony marathon victory. The critics said that during his championship run, his shifty promoter, Don King, picked him up and escorted him straight to the finish line, cutting every conceivable corner along the way. They said that this awkward, glorified clubfighter never belonged in the race to begin with, that he leapfrogged a dozen or so worthy challengers on his way to Holyfield. And in saying so, they were always sure to remind Ruiz of those 19 seconds of his life he spent inside the boxing ring with David Tua in March 1996.

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

With blood streaming down his face and with both eyes swollen, Ruiz clocks "The Real Deal" with a left hook. Ruiz relied on a Holyfield-like heart to pull out the victory in the championship rounds.

Ruiz remembers it, too. He remembers what it's like to be knocked to the bottom of the pit, where it is lonely, cold, and dark. Ruiz decided there was only one thing to do with the 19 seconds that it took Tua's thundering fists to introduce him to the floor of both the prize ring and the lucrative heavyweight division. He would wash his hands of it.

"The whole Tua thing, I still hear it all the time," said Ruiz. "It is something that happened and something that I keep in the back of my mind to make sure it never, ever happens again."

So with every jab, hook, and cross he drove into Holyfield's aging face in their first fight, Ruiz was thinking about more than his wife and two small children back in the grisly slums of Chelsea. He was thinking about more than the life that lay ahead for the four of them if he could somehow cross the finish line, his arms stretched victoriously toward the sky.

"It was more than just proving to everyone who I was," said Ruiz. "It was something I had to prove to myself, that I wasn't what everyone was saying I was, that I wasn't just a bum."

Every time Ruiz has ventured into the prize ring since the Tua defeat, he has carried that reminder like an ugly bloodstain on his trunks. Ruiz knows what it's like to be stamped with a label as ugly as the bottom of a spit bucket. He's long been labeled a pretender instead of a contender, a loser instead of a bruiser, and a chump instead of a champ.

"It's like no matter what I did after the Tua fight," said Ruiz, "it didn't matter. I'd never be forgiven for it."

No, it didn't matter that he climbed off the canvas from the Tua debacle and rattled off 11 straight victories (10 by knockout) en route to the first Holyfield encounter. And once he got there, it didn't even matter that he battered one of history's all-time greatest heavyweights, transforming the warrior's face into a swollen and bloody mess. The blood still remained on Ruiz' hands from 1996, and 12 hard rounds of washing them with Holyfield didn't do the trick. So, after the decision went to "The Real Deal," despite an outcry of scorecard larceny, Ruiz knew there was but one thing left to do.

PHOTO BY JED JACOBSOHN/ALLSPORT

An accidental clash of heads in the fourth round left Ruiz with a nasty gash on his forehead, and excitable trainer Stone ripped into ref Joe Cortez for not penalizing Holyfield. Stone's verbal assaults paid dividends in the 10th, when Holyfield lost a point for a low blow and Ruiz wasn't penalized for retaliating.

Holyfield feels the sting of a left jab from Ruiz. The four-time former champ's reflexes are clearly slowing, but Ruiz won't let suggestions that Holyfield is washed-up sour his career-best victory.

PHOTO BY JED JACOBSOHN/ALLSPORT

"I knew I had to do it again," he said. "I think I got a little respect, but not to the degree that I earned it. They were still cutting me short, saying that Holyfield was just washed-up and old and all of that. Nobody wanted to give me the credit I deserved from that fight. So, I knew I had to beat him again and, this time, make it count."

Part two of this underdog saga began in a fitting manner, with the longshot figuratively on the ropes, as Ruiz and his devoted handlers, the outspoken Norman Stone and Gabe Mari, found themselves on their knees before the rematch even began. With their beloved Somerville, Massachusetts, gym locking up its doors for good when the owners chose not to renew the lease, Ruiz stumbled into a nearby public gym, amid the trendy hum of Stairmasters, Lifecycles, and Spandex-clad gym rats. It was hardly the place to prepare for the war of a lifetime.

Five days later, Team Ruiz wisely removed themselves from such an absurd setting, but found themselves homeless and in limbo. With his original Vegas training quarters having already fallen through and King refusing to cover any training expenses, Ruiz, who would make a reported $1.1-million for the fight (compared to Holyfield's $5-million) was left out on the chilly sidewalk, his gym bags packed at his feet. With the big fight just five weeks away, Ruiz did exactly what came naturally. He returned to his roots.

The Ruiz camp renovated an old ambulance storage facility just a few blocks from his Chelsea home, turning it into a makeshift gym. The locals humorously cracked barbs, joking that after a more focused, poised Holyfield got finished with him this time, an ambulance would be exactly what Ruiz would need.

But this bleak, dreary setting was just the way Ruiz liked it, for it was quiet. But as "The Quiet Man" began to get his hands dirty in this gritty training camp, more bad news came thundering down upon the old ambulance garage. The expected sparring partners, one by one, began to duck out on him. Ray Mercer, Obed Sullivan, and Ray Anis all left Ruiz dangling in the cold, as he was forced to call upon local nobodies to prepare for Holyfield.

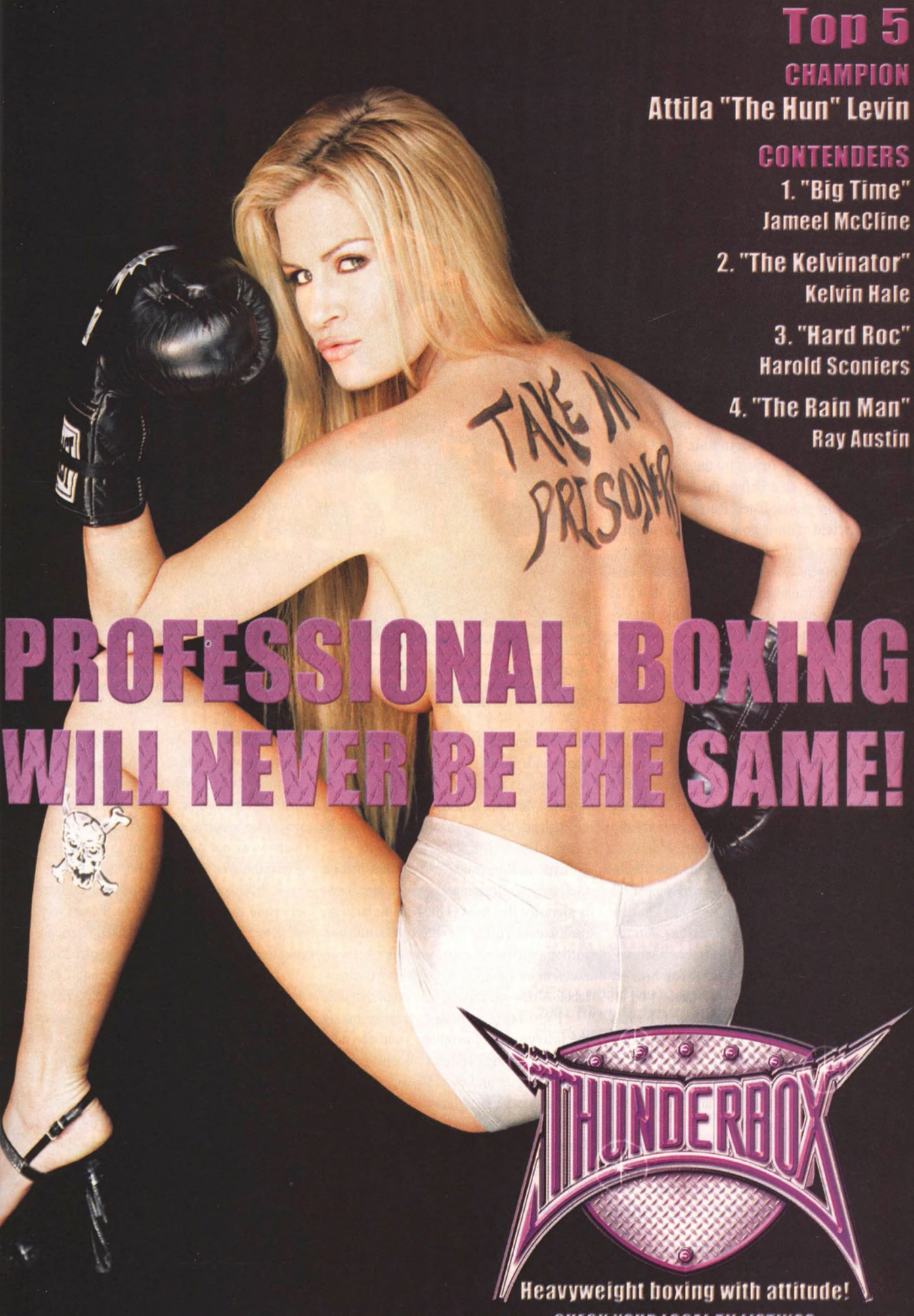
By the time Ruiz finally arrived in Vegas for the second Holyfield fight, the mission seemed as imposing as the desert mountains that surround the gambling oasis. A few days before the fight, a young female tourist came face-to-face with Ruiz in a hotel lobby and took a firsthand look at the man whose photo had been plastered all over town. And to no surprise, she saw precisely what almost everyone else saw. Ruiz was handsome but not striking. He was rugged but not chiseled. He was imposing but not threatening.

"She took one look at me and said, 'Wow, you're so small,'" recalled Ruiz. "Then she said, 'Holyfield looks like he could punch a hole right through that chest.'"

But it wasn't just the sculpted frame of Holyfield that had nine of 10 sportswriters and most of the boxing world predicting doom for Ruiz. The fierce look of intent had returned to the dark eyes of Holyfield, who was pacing anxiously just down the hall of the Mandalay Bay Casino on fight night, looking to improve on his shoddy showing against Ruiz last summer. Meanwhile, Ruiz plodded toward the ring like an awkward bull, carrying the unmistakable look of an underdog.

Thirty minutes later, Ruiz looked like a victim of Hannibal Lecter, his face transformed into a mass of cuts and bruises. There he sat, slumped painfully on his stool, peeping through eyes that

(Continued on page 60)


Top 5
CHAMPION
Attila "The Hun" Levin
CONTENDERS
1. "Big Time"
Jameel McCline
2. "The Kelvinator"
Kelvin Hale
3. "Hard Roc"
Harold Sconiers
4. "The Rain Man"
Ray Austin
TAKE NO PRISONERS
PROFESSIONAL BOXING
WILL NEVER BE THE SAME!
THUNDERBOX
Heavyweight boxing with attitude!

John Ruiz

(Continued from page 58)

looked like purplish slits. He breathed vigorously through a battered nose. The blood from a forehead gash, compliments of a Holyfield head clash, trickled down his cheeks. The competitive charge he had worked up in the early going, his frantic corner sensed, was slipping away.

Nonetheless, Ruiz kept bulling forward like an overworked tugboat, busting his way through the headbutts, the elbows, and the low blows to administer punishment of his own. What happened midway through the 11th round was not so much triggered by the power in Ruiz' right fist as much as it was fueled by the power in his heart. They said before the fight that the allegedly pillow-fisted Ruiz couldn't hurt Holyfield with a golf club. But when a blistering right hand caught the unsuspecting Holyfield flush on the temple, Ruiz suddenly found himself looking down at the man many consider the best heavyweight of the 1990s.

"I could see when he got up that he was in big trouble," said Ruiz. "I knew I had him almost out of there and that he was just holding on for dear life."

After Holyfield, 37-5-1 (25), struggled back to his feet inside of referee Joe Cortez' count, Ruiz unloaded punch after punch. In doing so, he was not only trying to finish the staggering, clutching Holyfield, but also trying desperately to scrub away that five-year stain that resulted from his 19-second loss to Tua. Five minutes later, when judges Stanley Christodoulou (South Africa), Chuck Giampa (USA), and Patricia Jarman-Manning (USA) all voted for him by scores of 116-110, 115-111, and 114-111, respectively, Ruiz felt as though he had finally replaced the stain with a badge of honor. The scorned pug who chugs through the Chelsea streets every morning in a pair of gray sweats and worn-down sneakers was a new man.

Even King knew what the moment meant to the classic overachiever. "What you just saw," the promoter pointed out, "was yesterday's nobody becoming today's somebody."

Still, even though virtually nobody outside of Holyfield's camp questioned the unanimous decision in Ruiz' favor, many observers consider the title about as genuine as Monopoly money. The real belt is in England, they say, resting somewhere in Lennox Lewis' London mansion.

Even to Ruiz himself, the WBA belt he took back to Boston a few days later hardly signified that he was the best big man on the planet. To the devoted husband and father of two, it represents something much more significant. It represents a new label. A new identity. A new beginning.

"I just heard somebody refer to me as the heavyweight champion," said the man who spends his off time coaching local Little League and Pop Warner football. "And it doesn't sound right yet."

Nonetheless, as soon as ring announcer Jimmy Lennon Jr. read the decision, Puerto Rican fans began celebrating the first-ever heavyweight titlist of Latino descent. Two thousand miles away in Boston, they were doing much the same, hailing the city's first world championship of any kind since the Celtics took care of Houston way back in 1986. But make no mistake about it. What Ruiz accomplished in the magic Vegas night—when he stole a warrior's spirit and replaced it with his own—was not a Latino thing or a Puerto Rican thing or a Boston thing.

It really doesn't matter if you're black or white or Asian or Afghan. For anyone who has ever been stamped with a negative label, seeing the 29-year-old Ruiz, 37-4 (27), complete the comeback of a lifetime had to be a gratifying experience. And maybe somewhere, a middle-aged woman named Rosie is thanking him for washing away the shame and the hurt from such a troubled name. Today, Ruiz is no longer a byword for cheating, failure, and disgrace. From now on, when you hear them speak of Ruiz, they'll only be talking of one thing. They'll be talking about a true champion. ■

Ted Bodenrader is a freelance writer based in Boston and a regular contributor to this magazine.

PHOTO BY JED JACOBSOHN/ALLSPORT

Ruiz decked Holyfield with a right hand in the 11th round, and probably would have floored him a couple more times if Holyfield hadn't held on so desperately for the remainder of the round. It was the first time The Real Deal had been dropped since his third fight with Riddick Bowe, back in '95.

OUR SIXTH EDITION! UPDATED & REVISED!

The 2001

BOXING ALMANAC!

THIS DIGEST-SIZED CHUNK OF HISTORY HAS IT ALL!

196 PAGES OF REFERENCE MATERIAL EVERY BOXING FAN'S *GOTTA* HAVE!

- **Records and mini-profiles of boxing's world champions and star contenders**
- **A chronology of the top boxing news events of 2000**
- **A complete listing of all 2000 title fights**
- **Complete title lineages of all 17 weight divisions**
- **Hall of Fame listing**
- **The top 10 stories of 2000**
- **A complete listing of *The Ring* magazine awards, dating back to 1928**
- **All-time division ratings**
- **Statistics**
- **And much, much more!**

ON SALE NOW!

IF YOU CAN'T FIND IT, ORDER IT!

☑ YES! I would like to order my copy of the ***2001 Ring Almanac***. I have enclosed $7 in check or money order (postage included) as payment in full.

Send To:
London Publishing Co.
P.O. Box 910
Ft. Washington, PA 19034

Name_____

Address_____ Apt.____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

For all orders outside the U.S., you must add $1.50 for every issue to be sent surface mail, and $3 for every issue to be sent airmail. International money order in U.S. funds only. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

5449/12-00/4c

Don't Look At Us Like We Have Six Heads...

ANDREW LEWIS IS A LEGITIMATE THREAT TO SHANE MOSLEY!

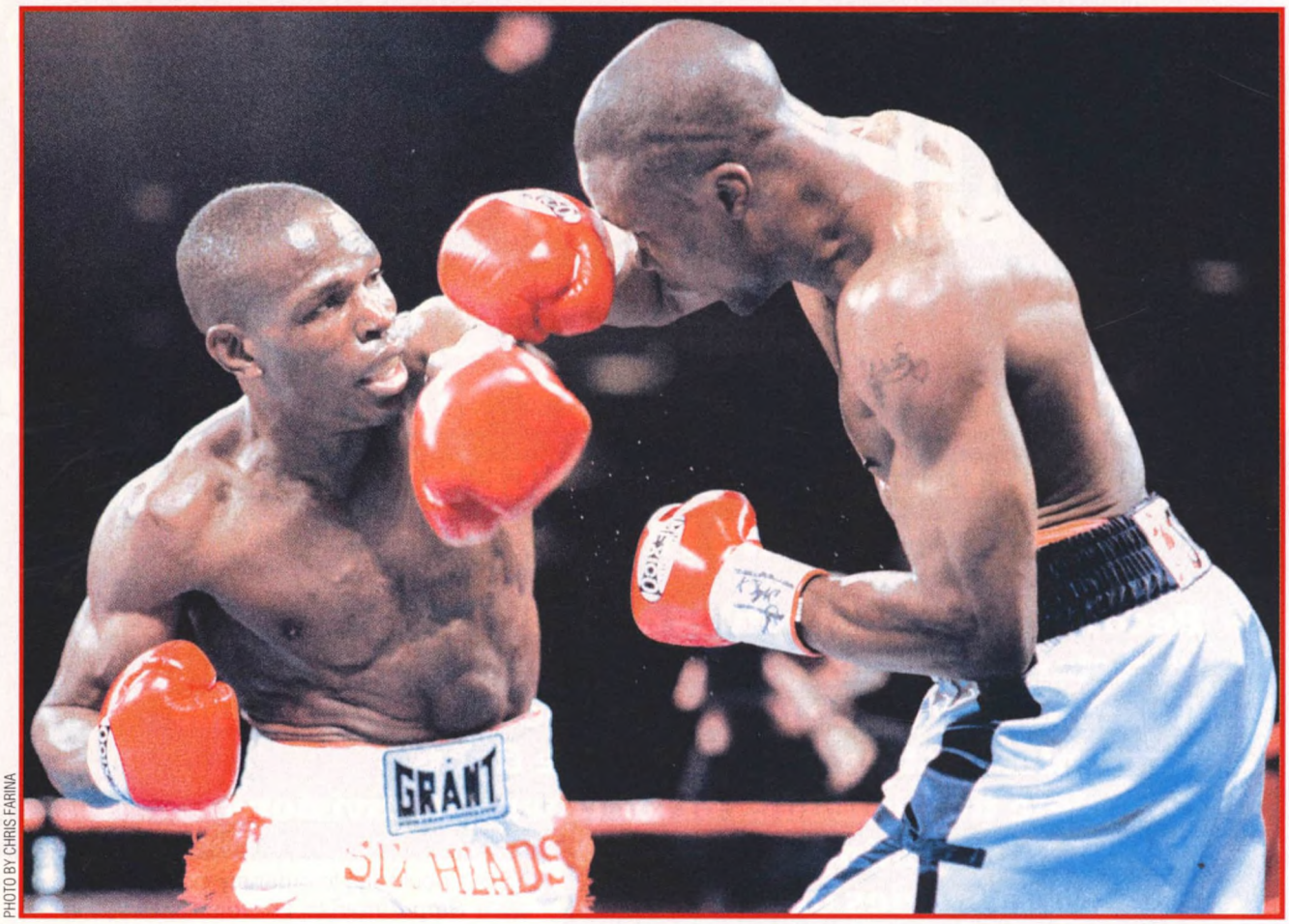


PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

A fired-up Lewis tears into James Page en route to an impressive seventh-round knockout and the vacant WBA welterweight title in an HBO-televised bout. "Six Heads" earned his unusual nickname in his first amateur fight.

By William Dettloff

It was only a few years ago that the welterweight division was overflowing with stars. Oscar De La Hoya, Felix Trinidad, Pernell Whitaker, Ike Quartey. All were champions or top contenders. It was the best weight class in the game. Then De La Hoya beat Whitaker, beat Quartey, lost to Trinidad, more or less, and the division dried up. Whitaker continued to fade, Quartey vanished, and Trinidad fled to junior middleweight, convinced by his scare against De La Hoya, apparently, that it was time indeed to jump to 154.

Then Sugar Shane Mosley came in and deposed De La Hoya, the last of the old 147-pound guard, in the process firmly and quickly entrenching himself as the best welterweight in the world, if not the best fighter pound-for-pound. Suddenly the class turned dull. That happens when one guy is so much better than his peers. In the division that a short time earlier

PHOTOS BY HOLLY STEIN/HBO

Lewis took some clean shots from the hard-hitting Page (top), but he absorbed them well and fought back with sharp, accurate blows of his own (above), eventually finishing the former champ with a right to the temple.

boasted an impressive array of superfight possibilities, we found ourselves wondering if we'd ever again see a big, competitive welterweight title fight. Even Mosley wonders. Why else would he challenge Trinidad to a scrap at 154, even as "Tito" is on his way to middleweight and who knows where after that.

What happened to all the good welterweights, the ones who would take the place of the departed stars and challenge Mosley? Where to start? Vernon Forrest has been, at least so far, rather a disappointment. Veterans Oba Carr, Wilfredo Rivera, and Derrell Coley have had their chances already. Novices Thomas Damgaard and Shannan Taylor—the latter of whom Mosley will almost assuredly have pummeled into defeat by the time you read this—lack experience against credible opposition. Has the welterweight division become a smaller version of light heavyweight, a class ruled by an untouchable superstar, presiding over a collection of ordinary and awe-struck subjects? Maybe not.

In mid-February, Andrew "Six Heads" Lewis—"Six" to his friends—destroyed former WBA welterweight titlist James Page in seven one-sided rounds and claimed the vacant title. Lewis' performance was such that HBO's Larry Merchant opined immediately afterward that the new titlist stood as a legitimate challenger to Mosley. Heady praise indeed considering Merchant once caught hell for drawing comparisons between Mosley and Sugar Ray Robinson, right before Mosley won the IBF lightweight title against Philip Holiday. Of course, Merchant isn't the only one who thinks Lewis could be a threat to Sugar Shane.

"I definitely feel like I could beat Mosley," said Lewis, about a week after annihilating Page on the undercard of Erik Morales' title-winning effort against Guty Espadas. "I'd just like a couple of more fights, then I'll be ready for him. I've studied him a lot, and he's a good boxer and a good puncher, but you can beat him if you put pressure on him, and I can do that. De La Hoya could have beaten him too, but he fought the wrong fight. You've got to throw good, short shots and stay very, very busy. Throw more than 100 punches a round. I do that every day in the gym."

Actually, it's what Lewis has been doing every day since he was five years

old. That's when he first put on a pair of gloves. Maybe he was born to be a fighter, maybe he wasn't. He really didn't have a choice. His whole family was in the boxing business back in Guyana; his father, four of his father's brothers, and an uncle on his mother's side all boxed professionally. As the lore goes, Lewis got his nickname in his first amateur smoker when he decked his opponent and the kid got up and told the referee to stop the fight because he saw six heads in front of him.

"Everybody calls me 'Six Heads,' even my mom," the 30-year-old fighter said with pride.

Lewis went on to compile an amateur record of 45-3 (45), and no, that's not a typo; every win was by knockout. "Whenever I fight, I want to win by knockout. I believe in stopping the guy," Lewis said. He still laments his only decision win as pro, that over hard-hitting Teddy Reid in December '98.

"I took the fight on 10 days notice and I wasn't training at the time or anything. If I was, I'd have knocked him out."

Lewis was in no danger of being extended against Page. He jumped on him at the opening bell and had him reeling within the first two minutes. "I knew he was a slow starter and that I was faster and could knock him out," he said. In the second round, Lewis, 20-0-1 (19), rocked Page with a scorching right uppercut, then nudged him to the canvas. Page, 25-4 (19), tried to retaliate, but he was stiff-legged and slow and no match for Lewis' speed. Though he managed to land a few hard hooks, he was pummeled soundly over the next several rounds and dropped by a torrid right hook in the seventh. Referee Kenny Bayless stopped it at 1:13 of the round.

PHOTO BY MICHAEL TUPPS

The best news for boxing fans is that Lewis' outstanding performance against Page made Six Heads a viable challenger for Sugar Shane Mosley, pictured wearing THE RING's pound-for-pound belt.

It was the end of a long wait for Lewis. The two had been scheduled twice before to meet, but each time Page pulled out. The last time, Page was too occupied fighting Don and Carl King, and after dumping them, signed with James Prince. Not long after, the WBA stripped him for avoiding Lewis, but somehow Prince managed to convince the organization to let him face Lewis for the vacant title. And in the end it worked out as well as it was going to for Page. He ended up pulling in $200,000, when his purse would have been $100,000 had he faced Lewis the first time around.

Probably, Page knew going in what was going to happen. He'd sparred Lewis three or four times in the past and, according to Lewis, got whipped each time, once on Lewis' first day in the gym after Page already had been training for three weeks. The two bantered about the details of their sparring sessions in the days before the match, each recalling wholly different scenarios. In the end, we found out who was telling the truth, and it caught a lot of folks by surprise, even if Lewis went into his first world title fight as the favorite.

"The people deeply involved in this business knew who we were and how good Six is, but because no one's been willing to fight him, we weren't able to showcase him," said Nelson Fernandez, Lewis' manager. "For example, when everyone kept crying about how no one wanted to fight Vernon Forrest, I was in contact with Main Events, his promoter. I must have called them, I swear, half a dozen times and offered to fight Forrest, but they always had some excuse. There was always some reason."

According to Fernandez, there was an agreement in place for Lewis to face De La Hoya in De La Hoya's first comeback fight, before "The Golden Boy" chose the much less imposing Arturo Gatti as his dance partner.

Fernandez and Lewis hooked up in

1996, around the time Lewis blasted out veteran contender and fellow Guyanan Terrence Alli in two rounds in Georgetown. It was Alli's second fight after his brave loss to Julio Cesar Chavez, and it convinced Lewis, after just his ninth pro fight, that the time was right to move to America.

"I said before the fight that after I knock him out, I'm going to move to America to train, and after I stopped him and won the Guyanan welterweight title, that's what I did."

Lewis settled in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn. Fernandez was managing another Guyanan fighter, junior lightweight contender Gary St. Clair, who arranged a meeting at Gleason's Gym. Lewis was wary.

"He looked like one of those old-style Italian guys who manages fighters and steals their money," Lewis recalled with a laugh. "He told me we could make a million dollars, and then, after I dropped a guy I was sparring with, he told me he could make me a world champion. I said okay."

Lewis has made it easy on his manager by being driven. According to Fernandez, he was back in the gym on the Tuesday following the Page fight. That's two days off.

PHOTO BY FRANK VITUCCI

The only time Lewis had to settle for a decision win, as an amateur or a pro, came against Teddy Reid in 1998. Six Heads took the fight on just 10 days notice and insists he would have knocked Reid out if he'd had time to prepare.

PHOTO BY FRANK VITUCCI

Lewis would love to fight Vernon Forrest, but according to Lewis' manager, Nelson Fernandez, Forrest's promoter, Main Events, turned down bouts with Six Heads on numerous occasions in the past.

"Everything he does, he does with everything he has," Fernandez claimed. "And there's no dog in him. Absolutely none. That's what I saw in him from the start. He gives it everything he's got all the time."

Fernandez says Lewis, who is a southpaw but effectively switches to a right-handed stance, even uses two full-time trainers: one for right-handed fighting, one for when he's left-handed. Angel DeJesus handles the left side and is the head trainer, while Quinto Soto takes the orthodox side and assists. Edgar "Butch" Sanchez comes in to shore up the defense. So far, the team has worked well together.

"Our team had a game plan in place for months before we fought Page," said Fernandez. "We had a game plan for Vernon Forrest too, and we'll have a game plan for Mosley, if that time comes. Six is a great listener and he follows the game plan perfectly."

There were a few moments in the Page fight, though, when Lewis stood too stationary and got caught with some shots he didn't need to. Fernandez admits he got nervous.

"I know Six has a great chin, but Page has a wicked left hook," said Fernandez.

"Six got a little away from the game plan, but we got back on track and went to work."

Went to work they did. It didn't even help Page that he enlisted Yoel Judah to train him for the fight. Judah knows Lewis well; his sons, IBF junior welterweight champion Zab, and Daniel, a super middleweight, have sparred with him. Of course, what happened in the ring on those days depends on whom you ask, and there is some rivalry there, perhaps due on some level to turf. The Judahs are exceedingly proud of their Brooklyn roots. Lewis lives in Brooklyn, but trains at Joe Grier's Boxing Academy in Paterson, New Jersey.

Lewis' family still lives in Guyana. They didn't make the voyage for his win over Page, but he says they'll be here for his first defense. In the meantime, the government and people in Georgetown and beyond are celebrating. Lewis is the second Guyanan world champion ever (the first was '80s light heavyweight titlist Dennis Andries), an accomplishment of which the new champion is exceptionally proud.

"I am very proud because I always knew I could be a champion and that I would be a champion. And it makes my people very proud. There are a lot of things going on in Guyana now. They want to give me land and a car and things like that. They are very proud of me."

They'll be prouder still if things work out for Lewis the way Fernandez is hoping. He says he's in negotiations with HBO to sign a three- or four-fight deal that will commence with a defense for Lewis on a *KO Nation* card in April, another one in the summer, then a card featuring both Lewis and Mosley against different challengers. After that, of course, comes the pot at the end of the rainbow—Sugar Shane. A lot of guys wouldn't see Mosley that way. A lot of guys would hold on to their slice of the title for as long as they could and hope for the best: that Mosley gets tired of 147 and jumps to 154. Not Six Heads.

"I am the champion of the world now and I am the best," he said. "And I'll prove it by beating the best." ■

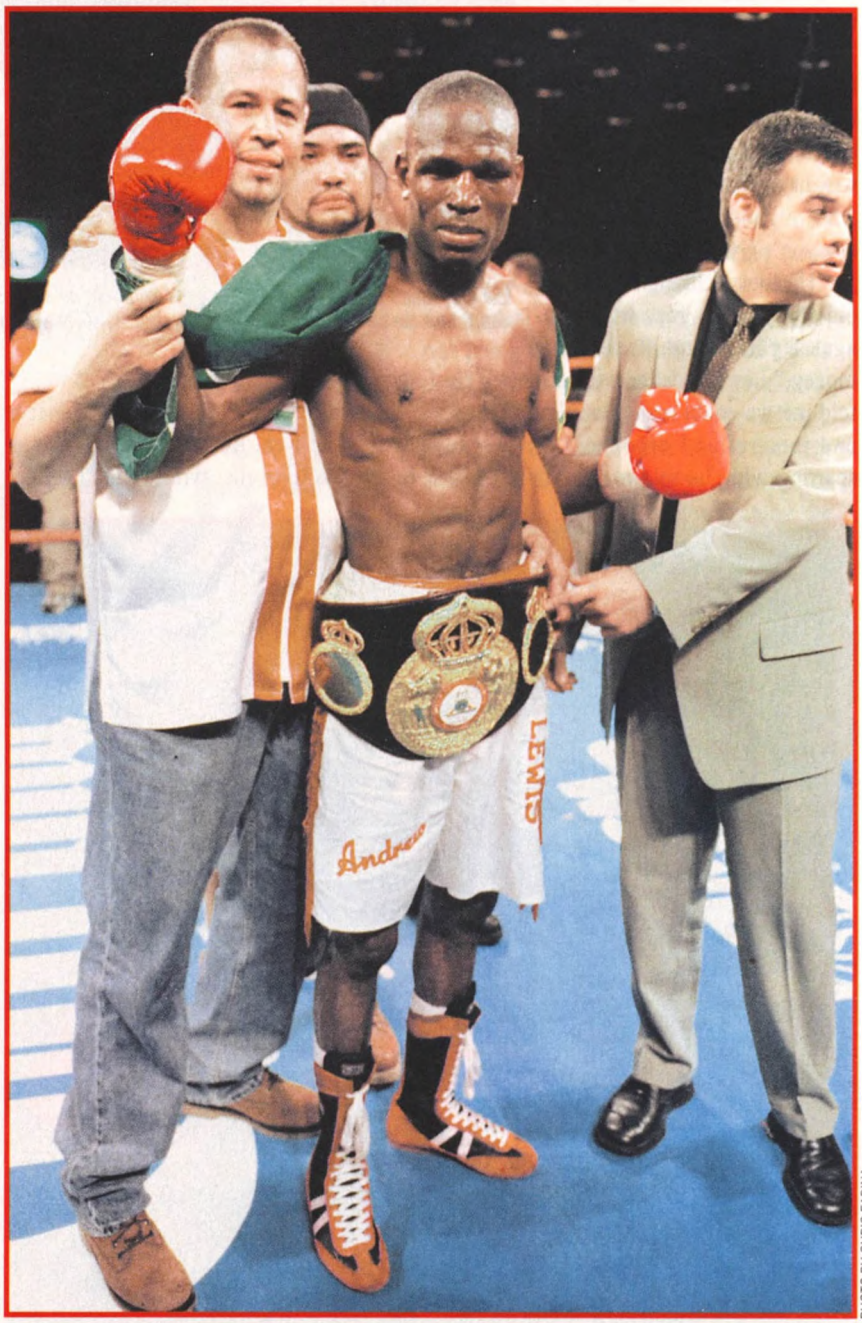


PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Lewis became the South American nation of Guyana's second world champion by winning the WBA belt. The first was WBC light heavyweight champ Dennis Andries. Lewis is now living in Brooklyn, but remains a major hero back home in Guyana.

WANTED!!!
BOXING
MEMORABILIA

• POSTERS • PROGRAMS • FULL TICKETS •
• FIGHT WORN EQUIPMENT • CHAMPIONSHIP BELTS •
• AUTOGRAPHED PHOTOS • WIRE PHOTOS •

• ALI •
• MARCIANO •
• DURAN •
• FRAZIER •
• ROBINSON •
• SALVADOR SANCHEZ •

HIGHEST PRICES PAID!

CONTACT:
GRANT ELVIS PHILLIPS
P.O. BOX 1090
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10018
(917)-709-8374
E-MAIL:GRANTELVIS@AOL.COM

BOXING FIGHT POSTERS, PROGRAMS, ART PRINTS, T-SHIRTS, PHOTOS & AUTOGRAPHS

GREAT MOMENTS IN BOXING

8"x10" B&W Action Photos — Just $4.50 ea.

- Robinson/LaMotta Fight
- Louis-Schmeling Battle
- Dempsey beats Willard
- Marciano slugs Lastarza
- Robinson beats Basilio
- Tunney/Dempsey Battle
- Sanchez/Lopez Battle
- Pep vs Saddler Fight
- Marciano's KOs Walcott
- Robinson slugs Gavilan
- Sanchez beats Gomez
- Ali floors Liston
- Hagler nails Hearns
- Leonard defeats Hearns
- Frazier upsets Ali
- Graziano - Zale classic
- Ali-Foreman Battle
- Marciano KO's Louis

8"x10" B&W Photos - Just $4.50 ea.

Ali • Basilio • Delahoya • Chavez • Corbett
Dempsey • Duran • LaMotta • Leonard • J. Johnson
Jones Jr. • Louis • Marciano • Foreman • Tyson
Pazienza • Robinson • Pep • Sanchez • Holyfield

8"x10" COLOR PHOTOS - $5.50 ea.

Ali • Delahoya • Benitez • Camacho • Pazienza
Chavez • Cooney • Gatti • Duran • Foreman
Frazier • Hagler • Hearns • Holmes • Holyfield
Leonard • Mancini • A. Moore • Patterson • Bowe
Lewis • Pryor • Morrison • M. Spinks
Marciano • Tyson • Whitaker • Jones Jr. • Hamed

BASEBALL CAPS - $17 EA:

DELAHOYA/CAMACHO • PAZIENZA/DURAN • DELAHOYA/KAMAU
DELAHOYA/WHITAKER • HOLYFIELD/MOORER II • TYSON/BERBICK
PAZIENZA/ROSENBLATT • DELAHOYA/RUELAS • TYSON/HOLYFIELD
HOLYFIELD/TYSON II • CHAVEZ/DELAHOYA • OSCAR DELAHOYA
Delahoya/Chavez II • TYSON/RUDDOCK II • JONES/PAZIENZA
CHAVEZ/GAMACHE • MOORER/FOREMAN • DURAN/CAMACHO
DELAHOYA/CARR • F. MAYWEATHER/RIOS • TEAM DURAN
DELAHOYA/RIVERA • IRON MIKE TYSON • DELAHOYA/TRINIDAD
DELAHOYA/MOSLEY • DELAHOYA/QUARTEY • DELAHOYA/CHARPENTIER

8 X 10 AUTOGRAPHED PHOTOS

MUHAMMAD ALI	$225.00
OSCAR DELAHOYA	$80.00
JOE FRAZIER	$75.00
LARRY HOLMES or ANDREW GOLOTA	$45.00 ea.
MAX SCHMELING	$60.00
JAKE LAMOTTA or TOMMY HEARNS	$50.00 ea.
ALEXIS ARGUELLO or WILLIE PEP	$45.00 ea.
SUGAR RAY LEONARD or BEAU JACK	$50.00 ea.
HECTOR CAMACHO or VINNY PAZIENZA	$30.00 ea.
EMILE GRIFFITH or SAAD MUHAMMAD (BW)	$25.00 ea.
GEORGE FOREMAN or TOMMY MORRISON	$75.00
WILFREDO GOMEZ or CARMEN BASILIO	$35.00 ea.
CARLOS PALOMINO	$35.00
ROBERTO DURAN	$50.00
KID GAVILAN (BW)	$60.00
EVANDER HOLYFIELD	$100.00
MIKE TYSON or BILLY CONN	$150.00 ea.
FLOYD PATTERSON or M. SPINKS	$45.00 ea.
KEN NORTON or JORGE PAEZ	$35.00 ea.
RAY MANCINI or Arturo Gatti	$35.00 ea.
ARCHIE MOORE or MARVIN HAGLER	$75.00 ea.

AUTOGRAPHED BOXING GLOVES

(Single Gloves, Guaranteed Authentic)

Evander Holyfield/Lennox Lewis (by both)	$300.00
Roberto Duran	$110.00
Shane Mosley	$165.00
Muhammad Ali	$350.00
Marvelous Marvin Hagler	$125.00
Sugar Ray Leonard or Joey Gamache	$85.00 ea.
Ray "Boom Boom" Mancini	$100.00
Joe Frazier or Jake LaMotta	$175.00 ea.
Mike Tyson	$225.00
Vinny Pazienza or Bobby Czyz	$100.00 ea.
Larry Holmes	$125.00
Oscar de la Hoya or Roy Jones	$175.00 ea.
Carmen Basilio or Vito Antuofermo	$95.00 ea.
Archie Moore or Lennox Lewis	$200.00 ea.
Evander Holyfield	$250.00
Tommy Morrison or Nassem Hamed	$125.00 ea.

FIGHT POSTERS

ALI/BUGNER (Linen Backed)	$1,000.00
ALI/FRAZIER I (LeRoy Neiman Poster)	$600.00
ALI/FRAZIER I (Closed Circuit) POSTER	$300.00
ALI/FRAZIER III — ON SITE	$3,000.00
ALI/FRAZIER III (Closed Circuit) NEIMAN	$95.00
ALI/HOLMES (REPRINT)	$20.00
ALI/HOLMES	$100.00
ALI/LISTON 35TH ANNIVERSARY	$20.00
ALI/NORTON III	$400.00
BARRERA/DIAZ or HOLYFIELD/HOLMES	$15.00 ea.
BOWE/GOLOTA or BOWE/GOLOTA II	$45.00 ea.
CAMACHO/ROSARIO or CHAVEZ/CAMACHO	$75.00 ea.
CHAVEZ/DELAHOYA or CHAVEZ/ALI	$10.00 ea.
CHAVEZ/HAUGEN or FOREMAN/COONEY	$25.00 ea.
CHAVEZ/RANDALL, TRINIDAD/CAMACHO	$45.00
CHAVEZ/TAYLOR or CHAVEZ/TAYLOR II	$35.00 ea.
CHAVEZ/WHITAKER - (LeRoy Neiman)	$100.00
JULIO CESAR CHAVEZ POSTER	$20.00
DELAHOYA/CAMACHO or DELAHOYA/RIVERA	$20.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/CAMPANELLA, Jones/Tate	$45.00
DELAHOYA/CHAVEZ II or DELAHOYA/TRINIDAD	$25.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/CARR or DELAHOYA/GONZALEZ	$20.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/HERNANDEZ or COONEY/SPINKS	$35.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/QUARTEY or DELAHOYA/CARR	$10.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/QUARTEY or CHAVEZ/DELAHOYA (Spanish)	$25.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/RUELAS or DURAN/CAMACHO	$35.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/WHITAKER or MANCINI/CHACON	$20.00 ea.
DURAN/BENITEZ or HAMED/SOTO	$25.00 ea.
FENECH/NELSON II or CZYZ/LALONDE	$45.00 ea.
FOREMAN/GRIMSLEY or FOREMAN/MORRISON	$40.00 ea.
FOREMAN/SAVARESE or SAVARESE/DOUGLAS	$10.00 ea
HAGLER/DURAN or MANCINI/CAMACHO	$35.00 ea.
HAGLER/HEARNS	$85.00
HAGLER/LEONARD or HAGLER/MUGABI	$50.00 ea.
HAMED/JOHNSON or HAMED/VAZQUEZ	$45.00 ea.
HAMED/KELLY or HAMED/INGLE	$75.00 ea.
HEARNS/BARKLEY II or NELSON/HERNANDEZ	$10.00 ea.
HOLMES/COONEY or HOLMES/SMITH	$35.00 ea.
HOLMES/MERCER or MORRISON/HIDE	$10.00 ea.
HOLMES/SHAVERS or HOLMES/M. SPINKS	$30.00 ea.
HOLYFIELD/BOWE BUD POSTER	$20.00
HOLYFIELD/BOWE III or TYSON/SAVARESE	$50.00
HOLYFIELD/CZYZ or HOLYFIELD/FOREMAN	$45.00 ea.
HOLYFIELD/DOUGLAS or HOLYFIELD/MERCER	$45.00 ea.
HOLYFIELD/LEWIS or LEONARD/NORRIS	$75.00 ea.
HOLYFIELD/MOORER I or II	$20.00 ea.
JONES/GRIFFIN II or JONES/JOHNSON	$20.00 ea.
LEONARD/DURAN III or LEONARD/LALONDE	$45.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/LEJIA or PAZIENZA/JONES	$45.00 ea.
LEONARD/HEARNS II or DELAHOYA/MOSLEY	$35.00 ea.
LEONARD/HEARNS or LEONARD/DURAN II	$40.00 ea.
LEWIS/GOLOTA or LEWIS/TUCKER	$10.00 ea.
LEWIS/GRANT or LEWIS/BOTHA	$45.00 ea.
LEWIS/MCCALL or LEWIS/TUA	$35.00 ea.
MARCIANO/WALCOTT (Reprint)	$25.00
MORALES/MCCULLOUGH or MORALES/RAMIREZ	$5.00 ea
MORRISON/LEWIS or PAZIENZA/DURAN II	$25.00 ea.
MORRISON/MERCER or MORRISON/RUDDOCK	$35.00 ea.
MORRISON/TILLMAN, DELAHOYA/HICKS	$50.00
PAZIENZA/CAMACHO or PAZIENZA/DURAN	$50.00 ea.
TAPIA/AYALA or PAZIENZA/ROSENBLATT	$20.00 ea.
TRINIDAD/WHITAKER or TRINIDAD/PETTWAY	$20.00 ea.
TYSON/BERBICK (LeRoy Neiman)	$150.00
TYSON/BRUNO II or TYSON/MCNEELEY	$20.00 ea.
TYSON/DOUGLAS or TYSON/TUBBS	$200.00 ea.
TYSON/GOLOTA or MOSLEY/DIAZ	$35.00 ea.
TYSON/HOLMES or TYSON/BIGGS	$35.00 ea.
TYSON/HOLYFIELD '91 BUD (Cancelled)	$50.00
TYSON/HOLYFIELD '96 or TYSON/SAVARESE	$60.00 ea.
TYSON/HOLYFIELD II - 5/3/97 (Cancelled)	$5.00
TYSON/HOLYFIELD II or WHITAKER/JACOBS	$10.00 ea.
TYSON/MATHIS or CHAVEZ/MITCHELL	$45.00 ea.
TYSON/RUDDOCK II or CHAVEZ/RAMIREZ	$75.00 ea.
TYSON/SPINKS (LeRoy Neiman)	$100.00
TYSON/STEWART or TYSON/FRANCIS	$50.00 ea.
TYSON/THOMAS or TYSON/SMITH	$85.00 ea.
TYSON/TUCKER or TYSON/TILLMAN	$45.00 ea.
MIKE TYSON or SUGAR RAY LEONARD POSTER	$15.00 ea.
HBO POSTER featuring 11 color photos of fights	$5.00

FIGHT PROGRAMS

1960 CASSIUS CLAY OLYMPIC PROGRAM	$1000.00
1976 RAY LEONARD OLYMPIC PROGRAM	$250.00
1984 OLYMPIC BOX-OFFS	$500.00
ALI/COOPER or ALI/YOUNG	$600.00 ea.
ALI/COOPER II	$350.00
ALI/LISTON II, ALI/ELLIS or ALI/MATHIS	$400.00 ea.
ALI/FOREMAN (Closed Circuit)	$100.00
ALI/FRAZIER II	$500.00
ALI/FRAZIER III (Closed Circuit)	$100.00
ALI/HOLMES or ALI/NORTON III	$125.00 ea.
ALI/LONDON or ALI/ROBINSON	$350.00 ea.
ALI/MILDENBERGER or ALI/WEPNER	$1,000.00 ea.
ALI/NORTON II or ALI/SHAVERS	$500.00 ea.
ALI/PATTERSON II	$700.00
ALI/QUARRY II or ALI/SPINKS	$500.00 ea.
ALI/QUARRY or ALI/LONDON	$300.00 ea.
ALI/SPINKS II or TYSON/THOMAS	$250.00 ea.
BENN/MCCLELLAN or BENITEZ/HAMSHO	$50.00 ea.
BOWE/GOLOTA I or II	$35.00 ea.
CHAVEZ/MAYWEATHER II or MANCINI/CHACON	$25.00 ea.
CHAVEZ/TAYLOR or CHAVEZ/RANDALL	$35.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/TRINIDAD or DELAHOYA/COLEY	$40.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/CHARPENTIER or FOREMAN/SAVARESE	$25.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/CHAVEZ II or DELAHOYA/CARR	$30.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/KAMAU or DELAHOYA/RIVERA	$25.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/LEJIA or DELAHOYA/MOLINA	$45.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/QUARTEY or DELAHOYA/TYSON	$45.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/WHITAKER or FOREMAN/STEWART	$45.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/MOSLEY or VARGAS/QUARTEY	$35.00 ea.
DURAN/BARKLEY or MANCINI/KIM	$90.00 ea.
DURAN/HEARNS or LEONARD/DURAN	$125.00 ea.
FOREMAN/MORRISON, DelaHoya/Dorsey	$80.00
GRAZIANO/ZALE (VG)	$250.00
GATTI/ROBINSON II or GRANT/SAVARESE	$25.00 ea.
GATTI/RODRIGUEZ or HAMED/ALICEA	$45.00 ea.
HAGLER/HEARNS or NORRIS/LEONARD	$60.00 ea.
HAGLER/MUGABI or HAGLER/OBEL	$45.00 ea.
HOLMES/MERCER or HAMED/McCULLOUGH	$25.00 ea.
HEARNS/BENITEZ or LEONARD/DURAN III	$80.00 ea.
HEARNS/CUEVAS or HAGLER/LEE	$125.00 ea.
HOLYFIELD/BEAN or HEARNS/KINCHEN	$45.00 ea.
HOLYFIELD/BOWE I, II or III	$75.00 ea.
HOLYFIELD/COOPER or HOLYFIELD/DOKES	$45.00 ea.
HOLYFIELD/HOLMES or HOLYFIELD/MOORER	$45.00 ea.
HOLYFIELD/QAWI or HOLYFIELD/RODRIGUEZ	$100.00 ea.
JONES/GRANT or TSZYU/CHAVEZ	$25.00 ea.
JONES/DELVALLE or JONES/R. JOHNSON	$30.00 ea.
JONES/SOSA or JONES/GRIFFIN	$25.00 ea.
LEONARD/DURAN II or CAMACHO/ROSARIO	$50.00 ea.
LEONARD/HEARNS I or II	$65.00 ea.
LEWIS/MALCOLM (PRO DEBUT)	$250.00
LEWIS/McCALL or LEWIS/GOLOTA	$25.00 ea.
LOUIS/CARNERA or LOUIS/GALENTO	$700.00 ea.
LOUIS/CONN II or LOUIS/NOVA	$350.00 ea.
MARCIANO/CHARLES (ex)	$400.00
MORALES/BARRERA or TYSON/MCNEELEY	$25.00 ea.
PAZIENZA/DURAN I or II	$25.00 ea.
PAZIENZA/JONES or MERCER/MORRISON	$40.00 ea.
ROBINSON/TURPIN or SANCHEZ/GOMEZ	$300.00 ea.
SANCHEZ/LOPEZ	$325.00
SANCHEZ/NELSON or TYSON/HOSEA	$350.00 ea.
TRINIDAD/WHITAKER or TYSON/FRANCIS	$35.00 ea.
TRIPLE HITTER- Duran/Sims, Hearns, McGuigan	$25.00
TYSON/TUBBS or TYSON/HOLMES	$100.00 ea.
TYSON/HOLYFIELD I or II	$20.00 ea.
TYSON/SMITH, TYSON/MATHIS, TYSON/BOTHA	$45.00 ea.
TYSON/STEWART or TYSON/RATLIFF	$75.00 ea.

FIGHT T-SHIRTS

McCALLUM/TONEY • HOLYFIELD/MOORER II
DELAHOYA/CHAVEZ II • DURAN/CAMACHO • OLYMPIC TRIALS '93
CHAVEZ/TAYLOR • CHAVEZ/CAMACHO • O. DELAHOYA
TYSON/HOLYFIELD '91 • DELAHOYA/TRINIDAD
ROBERTO DURAN • LEONARD/DURAN II • RIDDICK BOWE
FELIX TRINIDAD • HAGLER/LEONARD • WHITERKER/JACOBS
DELAHOYA/CHARPENTIER • HOLYFIELD/HOLMES
DELAHOYA/KAMAU • DEALHOYA/WHITAKER • DELAHOYA/MOSLEY
DELAHOYA/CARR - MAYWHEATHER JR./VARGAS
DELAHOYA/QUARTEY • PAZ/ROSENBLATT • MANCINI/CAMACHO
Vinny Pazienza • LEONARD/DURAN III • LEONARD/NORRIS
LEWIS/TUA • MERCER/MORRISON • PAZIENZA/DURAN II
JULIO C. CHAVEZ • DELAHOYA/CAMACHO • SHANE MOSLEY
MUHAMMAD ALI • ROCKY MARCIANO • MIKE TYSON
CAMACHO/EDWARDS • HAGLER/HEARNS • MANCINI/HAUGEN
HECTOR CAMACHO • MORRISON/LEWIS • MAYWHEATHER/RIOS
CHAVEZ/GAMACHE • ALI/NORTON • LEONARD/HEARNS

***Just $18.00 each* (choose XL or L)**

Ordering Instructions: Please include $6 post. & Hdlg. per package (Foreign Countries $12 per package ground or $20 air)
Send To: BOB PACE, P.O. Box 698, Lynnfield, MA 01940 or call with AMEX, Disc., VISA or MC — (781) 284-4954

EATING DISORDERS:
BOXING'S HIDDEN PERIL

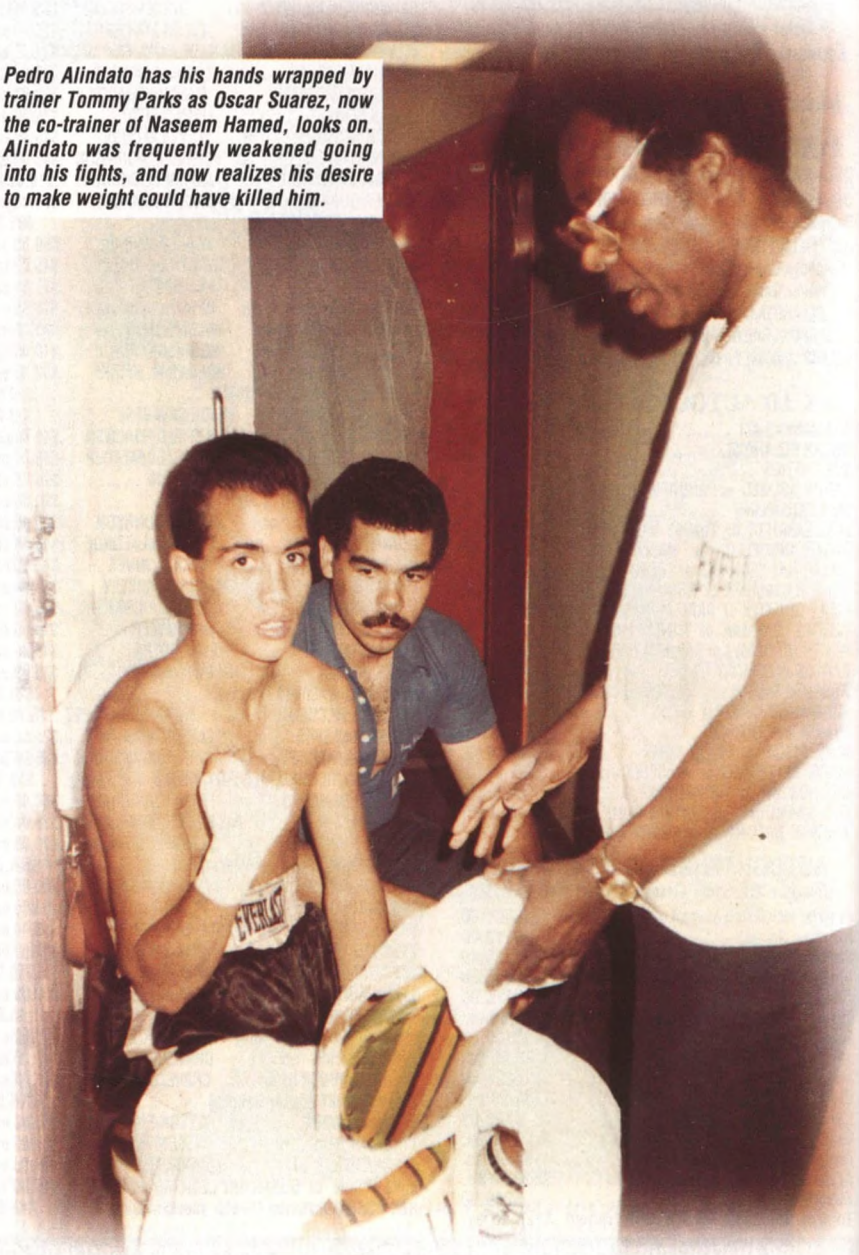
By Ted Bodenrader

People who saw Peter Alindato fight in the early-'80s believed that he owed his many fistic gifts to God Almighty. Those who saw the way the young Hispanic lived outside of the prize ring believed that he would someday soon get to meet Him.

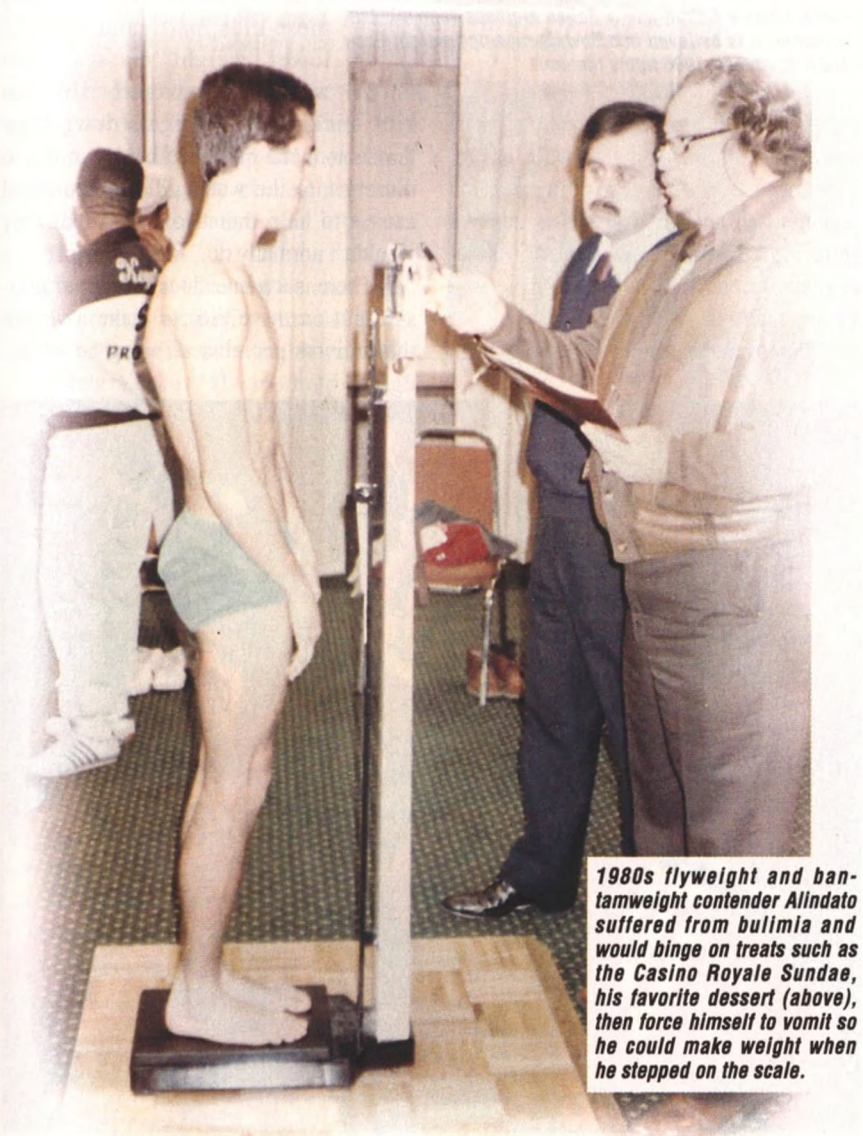
The late Cus D'Amato has beaten Alindato to making acquaintance with the big guy upstairs. But if the legendary trainer has ever pointed a curious eye down toward his former pupil, he would have seen that, indeed, "The Durango Kid" was never too far behind.

Alindato was once a part-time resident of D'Amato's fistfighter factory in Catskill, New York, the place where they turned cheesecakes into beefcakes through intense manual training. Since the beginning, when the young Puerto Rican with the flickering fast hands first arrived on the scene, D'Amato knew there was something dark and self-destructive about Alindato, and it was enough to trigger a deep, boiling concern. D'Amato witnessed it with his own eyes when the stringy flyweight tiptoed through his kitchen with a bag full of scrumptious cookies tucked quietly underneath his arm. Knowing whom the cookies belonged to, the 200-pound monster with the cinderblock fists and the feisty appetite, it was considered a flirtatious brush with death by many of the dwelling's inhabitants.

"I used to steal Mike Tyson's cookies all the time and shove them into my mouth the fastest I could," recalled Alindato. "I'd



Pedro Alindato has his hands wrapped by trainer Tommy Parks as Oscar Suarez, now the co-trainer of Naseem Hamed, looks on. Alindato was frequently weakened going into his fights, and now realizes his desire to make weight could have killed him.



1980s flyweight and bantamweight contender Alindato suffered from bulimia and would binge on treats such as the Casino Royale Sundae, his favorite dessert (above), then force himself to vomit so he could make weight when he stepped on the scale.

lock myself in the closet so he wouldn't see me do it, and then he'd come looking for his cookies. Mike loved his chocolate chip cookies."

Of course, Alindato had already brushed paths with God many times in his young, troubled life, his family migrating back and forth between the nasty streets of Brooklyn and the nastier shores of Puerto Rico. And Alindato never quite forgot about that horrific day as an eight-year-old boy, fishing innocently on the Puerto Rican waterfront, when he was brutally raped and left for dead by two grown men. He never forgot about the near-tragic trip to the emergency room, stricken with asthma and repeated pneumonia, when doctors actually saw the boy slip through their fingertips and begin the eternal ascent to meet with Him. Somehow, miraculously, the doctors were able to revive the life back into the young Alindato, but The Durango Kid, as he'd later come to call himself, never quite forgot his five-minute encounter with his creator.

"I was dreaming that I met Him," said Alindato. "He was leaning back against the wall and he was looking down at me in my bed. People think I am crazy when I tell this story, but still, I know it was Him."

Actually, the insanity charges would be leveled at The Durango Kid much later in life. Oddly enough, the battle of a lifetime for Pedro Peter Alindato was not provided by a man in red boxing gloves or a pair of shoreline thugs or any torturous maladies that made the local hospital his home away from home. Instead, the horror that would haunt Alindato and drive him toward several suicidal bids over the ensuing decade sprung from his mischievous cookie raids in D'Amato's Catskill kitchen. It ultimately sprung a horrific 10-year stint with the eating disorder known as bulimia.

"As soon as Tyson gave up trying to find me," recalled Alindato, "I'd sneak outside and force myself to throw up. I had to keep the weight off if I wanted to fulfill my dream."

There was no other choice, believed Alindato. Boxing was his passion, his life, and his way out of such grim settings where deadly strangers dangerously lurk, sometimes just waiting to rape you of your values and of your existence. The way Alindato saw it, as many boxers on today's scene see it, there was only one way to remain competitive in such a taxing game.

PHOTO BY TEDDY BLACKBURN

Riddick Bowe got a snicker out of sharing the stage with Andrew Golota and a Polish kielbasa (above), but "Big Daddy's" obsession with eating was no laughing matter. It is believed that Bowe's repeated weight fluctuations took years off his career, and Golota dominated both of their 1996 fights (below).

"I felt that the lighter I was, the bigger advantage I had," admitted Alindato.

For the lanky Latino, that weight was an emaciated 108 pounds. By the time fight night would come about, after days of getting by on a mere apple and dousing himself with countless diuretics, Alindato was little more than a 5'7" coat rack, an assembly of limbs and bones with no meat to spare.

The next morning, when the fists had settled, Alindato would arrive in the kitchen like a boy on Christmas morning, and he'd be sure to dig in with both hands. While everyone else in the D'Amato household focused on two primary functions—training and boxing—Alindato's world consisted of two other specific duties.

"Binging and purging, binging and purging," said Alindato. "I'd kill myself to make weight, then when it was over, I'd blow right back up."

Yes, as soon as his duties were fulfilled in the prize ring, The Durango Kid instantly became The Dorito Kid. Chips, cake, cookies—basically anything considered junk food—Alindato would shovel it into his mouth like a trash compactor. "I'd eat it all," said Alindato, who'd soon blow up to 140 pounds. "Whatever I could get my hands on. And then I made sure that I'd throw it all up."

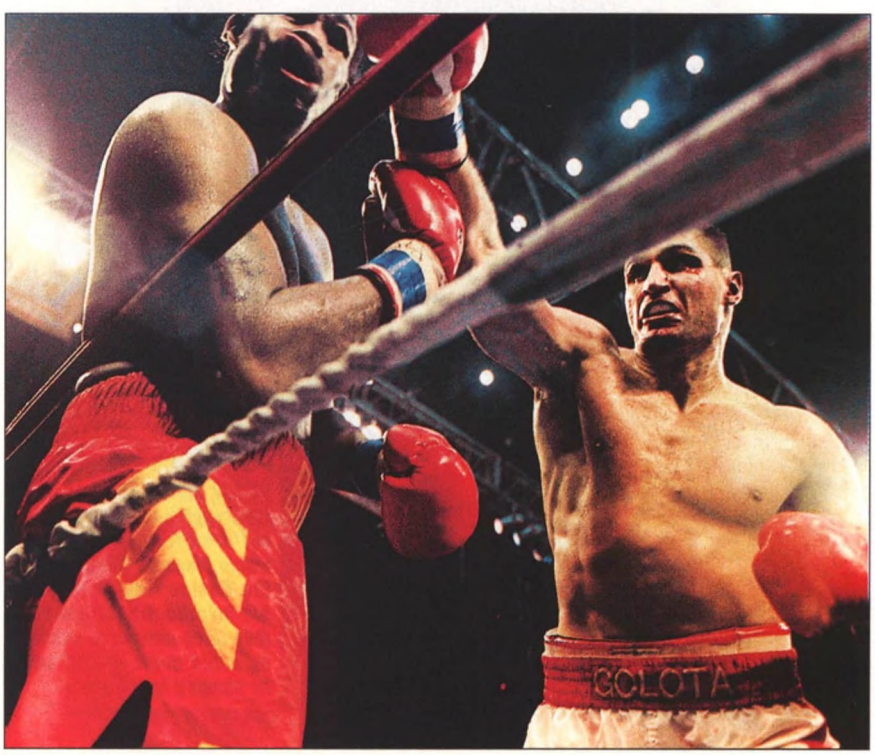
While the weight on Alindato's frame was constantly fluctuating, so were his performances in the ring. Finding a game opponent or an ESPN slot was never a problem. Attaining the proper electrolytes to remain consistently competitive was another matter.

"They were expecting big things from me," said Alindato, who'd go on to fight for trainers like Kevin Rooney, Tommy Parks, and Oscar Suarez. "My career was ruined by these problems. I had a choice. I could either stop boxing or I could die."

Teddy Atlas was long gone from the D'Amato domain when Alindato crept onto the scene. But D'Amato's former partner certainly knew of the rangy flyweight and knew of his vast potential. While boxing has been starving for civility and order, Atlas has seen many of its chief principals starving for a simple meal or two, and the results have left him with a weak stomach of his own.

"I've seen it all over the years," admitted Atlas. "I've seen these kids, particularly of the lower weight classes, who weren't eating properly. I've seen kids sticking their fingers down their throats to make weights. They've turned to diuretics, to the water pills, to unnatural causes to help them do things that they wouldn't normally do.

"There is a tremendous amount of pressure put on these kids to make a weight that trainers perceive as being an advan-



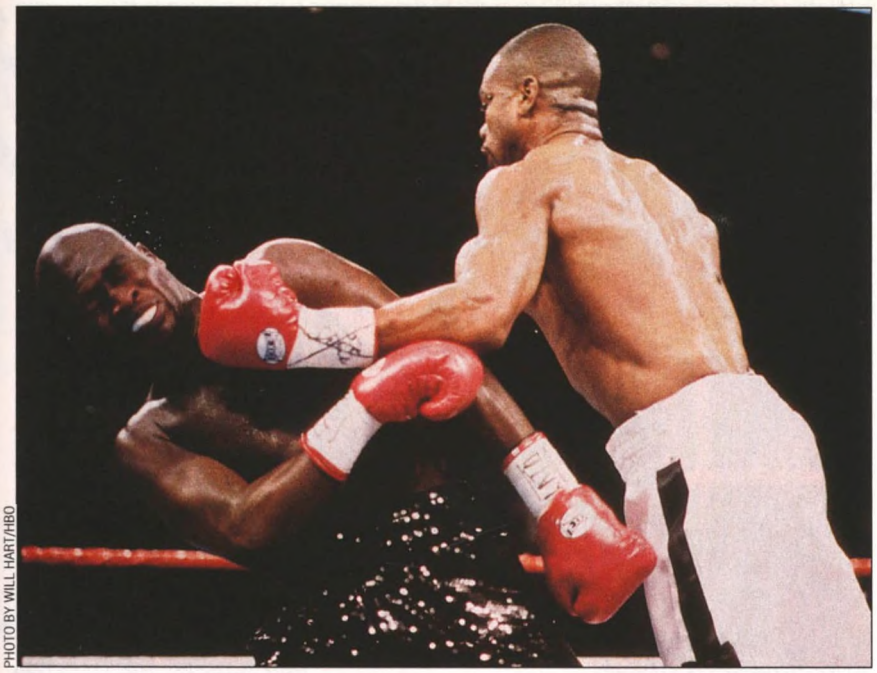


PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

James Toney's compulsive eating habits and struggles to make weight cost him dearly in his November 1994 bout with Roy Jones. A lethargic Toney was absolutely dominated as he surrendered the IBF super middleweight title to Jones by wide decision.

tage. They don't realize that they're not helping that kid. They're hurting him. You see these guys blowing up and then taking off enormous amounts of weight in irresponsible amounts of time, and it poses a real danger to them."

Atlas has been watching the emaciating life of a former world champion and he has been watching with sad eyes. Atlas, a lifelong New Yorker, always held a high regard for former heavyweight king Riddick Bowe, the ultra-talented big man who grew up just across town. Atlas watched Bowe's legendary battles with Evander Holyfield and his life-or-death struggles with Andrew Golota, and knows that only one career opponent has ever gotten the better of him. It was that dark, ugly scale.

"Riddick Bowe was known to blow up well over 300 pounds before a fight," said Atlas. "Then he'd end up taking off 60 pounds in a matter of a few weeks, and in the process, he'd be putting himself in danger. He'd be depriving himself of the electrolytes and the fluids that his body needed to remain healthy.

"I believe that's what we saw in the second Bowe-Golota fight. I believe that Bowe suffered neurological problems from these beatings he took as a result of starving himself to get down to a reasonable weight. And I think that's why we've seen

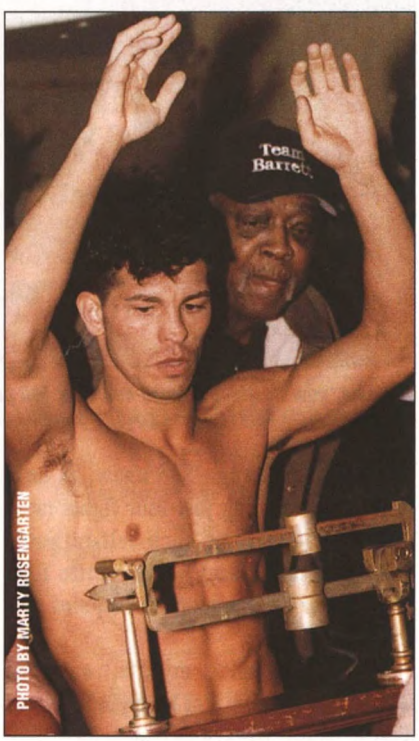


PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

A bone-dry Arturo Gatti goes to war with the scale before his controversial bout with Joey Gamache at Madison Square Garden. By fight time, Gatti was 19 pounds heavier than at the weigh-in, and he outweighed Gamache by 14 pounds—two full weight classes!

Bowe do things that are very uncharacteristic of him."

Bowe made headlines with a short-term imprisonment last year after being convicted of abducting his ex-wife Judy and their children. He was in trouble again in February 2001 after being decked with charges of assaulting his second wife, Terri.

"I can't help but think this all goes back to what happened to him in the ring," said Atlas. "And it all started with the way he failed to take care of his body."

You can't help but think that issues with the fork, knife, and spoon have also spelled the demise of other name commodities.

You can't help but think that James Toney could have used more than the aid of God in his lopsided decision loss to Roy Jones in November '94. Toney, who underwent a weight-loss regimen even more striking than Jones' dominant showing that night, could have used the aid of Jenny Craig.

You can't help but think that Arturo Gatti, who never found a challenge he didn't like, ever faced one as daunting as slimming down to the 135- or 130-pound limits for most of his illustrious career. What resulted were life-or-death struggles with the likes of Angel Manfredy, Gabriel Ruelas, and Ivan Robinson.

You can't help but think that Diego Corrales, all 6' of him, lost more than just a heart-churning TKO to Floyd Mayweather a few months ago. To slither in at a stingy 130 pounds, Corrales had to have lost the essential minerals and the nutrients needed to turn in a championship-caliber performance.

As much as Atlas, the fiery color commentator for ESPN2, anticipates the sport's megafights looming on the horizon, there's little that he anticipates more than what will be coming about in Vegas a few months down the road. With the sport's powers-that-be becoming increasingly aware of the hazards caused by such dramatic weight loss excursions, Nevada State Athletic Commissioner Marc Ratner, in conjunction with doctors Flip Homansky and Margaret Goodman, will be releasing an official guide, warning trainers and boxers of such existing perils.

"Sure, it's been a major concern of ours out here," said Ratner, aware of the speculation surrounding many ring deaths and their linking to food deprivation. "We feel that a lot of boxers are gaining and losing inordinate amounts of weight and that they are putting themselves at an unreasonable

risk in the process. We'd like to do something about that."

"I'd say it probably affects 10 percent of boxers," said Homansky. "It's more common among the lower weight classes, but nonetheless, it's happening plenty."

Most concerning to Homansky is a grave misconception among many young fighters who attempt to slice and dice away the body fat in preparation for the big night.

"They think they'll be able to replace everything they've lost in the matter of a day or two," said Homansky, referring to the day-and-a-half interval between the weigh-in and the fight itself. "Listen, you can drink all the Gatorade in the world, and your cells won't be able to react normally or take the punishment the way they would with proper nourishment. There are people who think you can take whatever you want out of your body and later replace it, and it doesn't work that way."

Although it is unproven if such conditions played a role in the deaths of Bobby Tomasello and Jimmy Garcia, or the permanent brain damage to Gerald McClellan, one thing is a certainty, said Homansky.

"It is a proven scientific fact that brain cells deprived of glucose die much quicker than brain cells with proper amounts of glucose," he said. "Your brain cells need glucose to survive. If your brain doesn't have enough glucose because of the excessive weight loss, and then you're taking punishment from punches on top of it, what do you think will happen?"

What happens is exactly what guys like Peter Alindato think about every day. In the case of The Durango Kid, it's more about what could have happened.

In the last televised bout of his career, a slugfest with Ricardo Cepeda in August '88, Alindato remembers staggering out for the sixth round of a fight he was clearly in control of. His arms were reduced to putty, his legs were like lifeless noodles.

"I was winning the fight, but I felt like I was in an electric chair, waiting to be executed," he recalled. "I remember walking toward the center of the ring for the sixth round, and I had nothing left in me to finish him off. My electrolytes were so out of whack, I literally couldn't see him standing in front of me.

"By the time he was done with me that round, my face looked like chopped liver."

Alindato, now weighing a much healthier 160 pounds, works with young fighters at his local YMCA in Albany, New York. He also speaks in public about his eating disorder.

But The Durango Kid knew, as he'd retire from the ring just four fights later, the repercussions of such self-inflicted harm goes far beyond losing a prize fight or a leather title belt or any amount of a promoter's money.

"I could have lost my life," said The Durango Kid. "And I'm damn lucky that I didn't."

Alindato now lives a safe life in Albany, New York, a healthy 160 pounds stretched across his solid frame. The days of tossing Tyson's cookies are in the distant past. When he's not training stringy, young hopefuls at the local YMCA, the 38-year-old speaks publicly about the perils of food deprivation and how it can turn a life upside-down, sometimes even end one altogether.

Alindato never met Bobby Tomasello or Jimmy Garcia or Gerald McClellan anywhere in his travels. He never got a chance to warn them of what he learned the hard way, that survival in a prize ring goes far beyond bobbing and weaving and putting up your gloves to ward off incoming danger.

But he has come across God a few times in his turbulent life and he knows well what he looks like. He's dark and handsome, and hopefully not at Alindato's bedside for a very long time.

And perhaps with the help of Ratner, Homansky, and Atlas, we won't be seeing God as the third man in any ring either. ■

Ted Bodenrader is a freelance writer based in Boston, Massachusetts, and a regular contributor to this magazine.

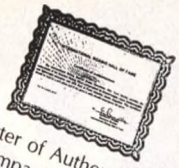
OFFICIAL AUTOGRAPH ENDORSEMENT

The Showplace of Boxing — Canastota, NY — Boxing Hall of Fame

International Boxing Hall of Fame

Limited Autograph Souvenirs

Boxing Greats Helping Support the Museum



Letter of Authenticity accompanies each item

EVERLAST SPEED BAG

$195

Autographed by 22 "Greats"

Arguello ★ Barkley ★ Basilio ★ Buchanan ★ Chandler ★ Chuvalo ★ DeMarco ★ Frazier ★ Fullmer ★ Gavilan ★ Hagler ★ Hopkins ★ LaPorte ★ Lopez ★ Manfredy ★ Norton ★ Olivares ★ Ortiz ★ Patterson ★ Pryor ★ Shavers ★ Torres

GIANT GOLD GLOVE

$225

Autographed by 22 "Greats"

Arguello ★ Barkley ★ Basilio ★ Buchanan ★ Chandler ★ Chuvalo ★ DeMarco ★ Frazier ★ Fullmer ★ Gavilan ★ Hagler ★ Hopkins ★ LaPorte ★ Lopez ★ Manfredy ★ Norton ★ Olivares ★ Ortiz ★ Patterson ★ Pryor ★ Shavers ★ Torres ★

EVERLAST BANNER

$125

Autographed by 21 "Greats"

Arguello ★ Barkley ★ Basilio ★ Buchanan ★ Chandler ★ Chuvalo ★ DeMarco ★ Frazier ★ Fullmer ★ Gavilan ★ Hagler ★ Hopkins ★ LaPorte ★ Lopez ★ Manfredy ★ Norton ★ Ortiz ★ Patterson ★ Pryor ★ Shavers ★ Torres ★

AUTOGRAPH GLOVES

$75

(single autograph on Everlast glove)

★ Earnie Shavers
★ Ray "Boom Boom" Mancini
★ Carmen Basilio
★ Leon Spinks
★ Michael Spinks
★ Alexis Arguello
★ Aaron Pryor
★ Christy Martin
★ "Sugar" Shane Mosley
★ Willie Pep
★ "Marvelous" Marvin Hagler
★ Ken Norton
★ Virgil Hill
★ David Reid
★ Michael Carbajal
★ Kid Gavilan
★ Bernard Hopkins
★ Floyd Patterson
★ Laila Ali
★ Buddy McGirt
★ Hector "Macho" Camacho
★ Johnny Tapia
★ Ken Buchanan
★ Danny "Little Red" Lopez
★ Angel Manfredy

COMBINATION GLOVES

(two autographs on Everlast glove)

$95

★ Basilio - Saxton
★ Basilio - Fullmer
★ Michael & Leon Spinks
★ Arguello - Pryor
★ Basilio - DeMarco

BOXING TRUNKS

(autographs on Everlast trunks)

★ Arguello-Pryor
★ Basilio-DeMarco
★ Bramble-Mancini
★ Willie Pep

$75

10TH ANNIVERSARY BELT

$395

1989-1999

'89-'99 Boxing Hall of Fame Limited Series

CHAMPIONSHIP GLOVE

All 21 autographs on red Everlast glove

$195

Arguello ★ Barkley ★ Basilio ★ Buchanan ★ Chandler ★ Chuvalo ★ DeMarco ★ Frazier ★ Fullmer ★ Hagler ★ Hopkins ★ LaPorte ★ Lopez ★ Manfredy ★ Norton ★ Olivares ★ Ortiz ★ Patterson ★ Pryor ★ Shavers ★ Torres ★

EVERLAST CORNER POST

$235

Autographed by:

Arguello ★ Barkley ★ Basilio ★ Buchanan ★ Chandler ★ Chuvalo ★ DeMarco ★ Frazier ★ Fullmer ★ Gavilan ★ Hagler ★ Hopkins ★ LaPorte ★ Lopez ★ Manfredy ★ Norton ★ Olivares ★ Ortiz ★ Patterson ★ Pryor ★ Shavers ★ Torres ★

BOXING ROBE

All 18 autographs on Everlast robe

$235

Arguello ★ Barkley ★ Buchanan ★ Chandler ★ Chuvalo ★ Frazier ★ Fullmer ★ Hagler ★ LaPorte ★ Lopez ★ Manfredy ★ Norton ★ Olivares ★ Ortiz ★ Patterson ★ Pryor ★ Shavers ★ Torres

HAGLER & DURAN

★ **Both champions on red Everlast glove** ★

$125

Hagler

Duran

★ **Limited Quantity** ★

HEAVYWEIGHT GLOVE

All heavyweight champions on red Everlast glove

$150

Ken Norton ★ Floyd Patterson ★ Leon Spinks Michael Spinks ★ Joe Frazier

Phone Orders: (315) 697-7095
Fax (315) 697-5356

Make checks payable to:
BOXING HALL OF FAME
1 Hall of Fame Drive
Canastota, NY 13032

MasterCard VISA

Please add 7% Sales Tax and $6.00 per item for shipping

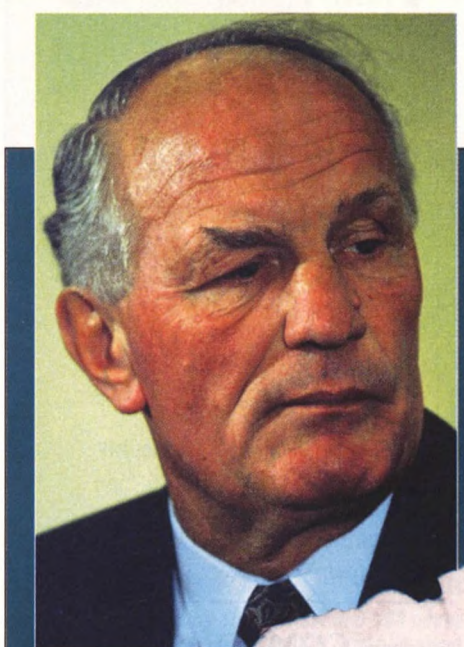
SIR HENRY COOPER

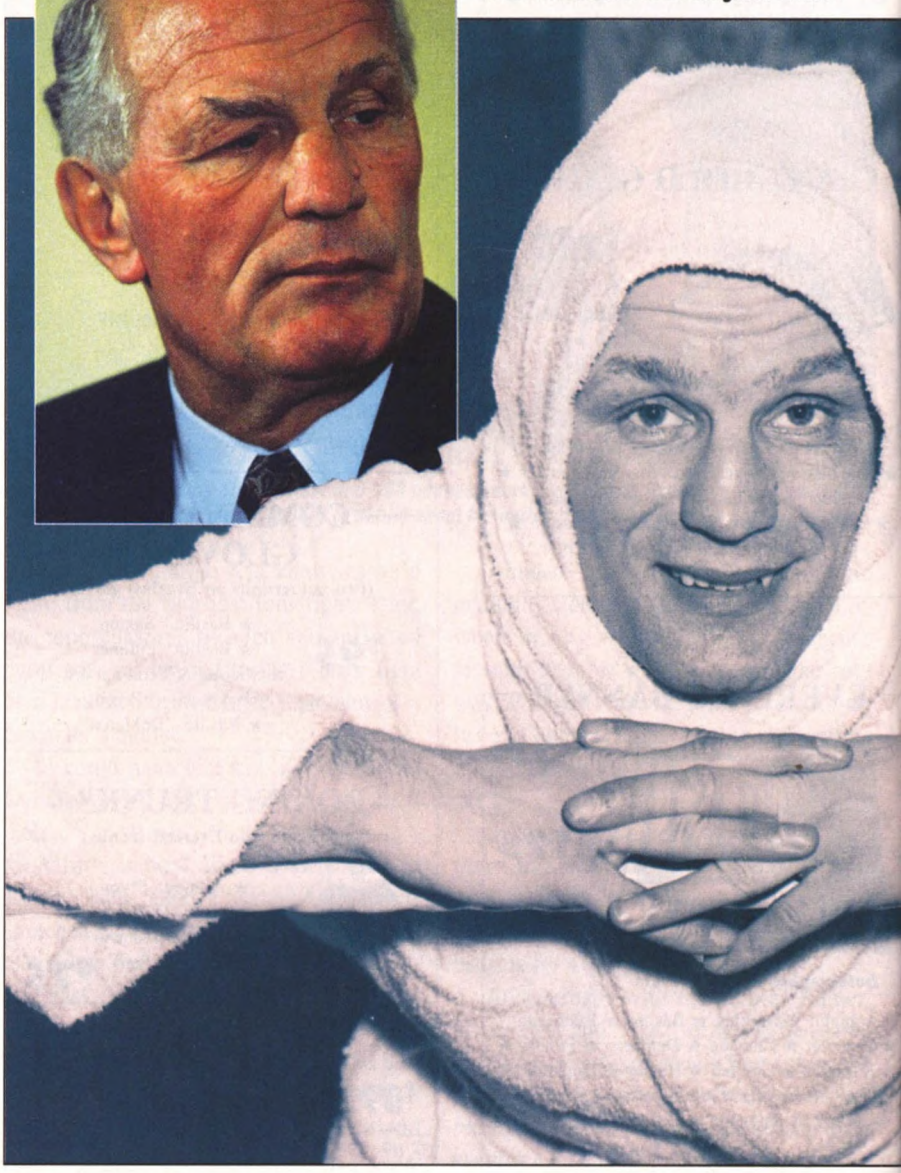
"My Knighthood Is An Honor For The Whole Boxing Game In This Country"

By Brian Doogan

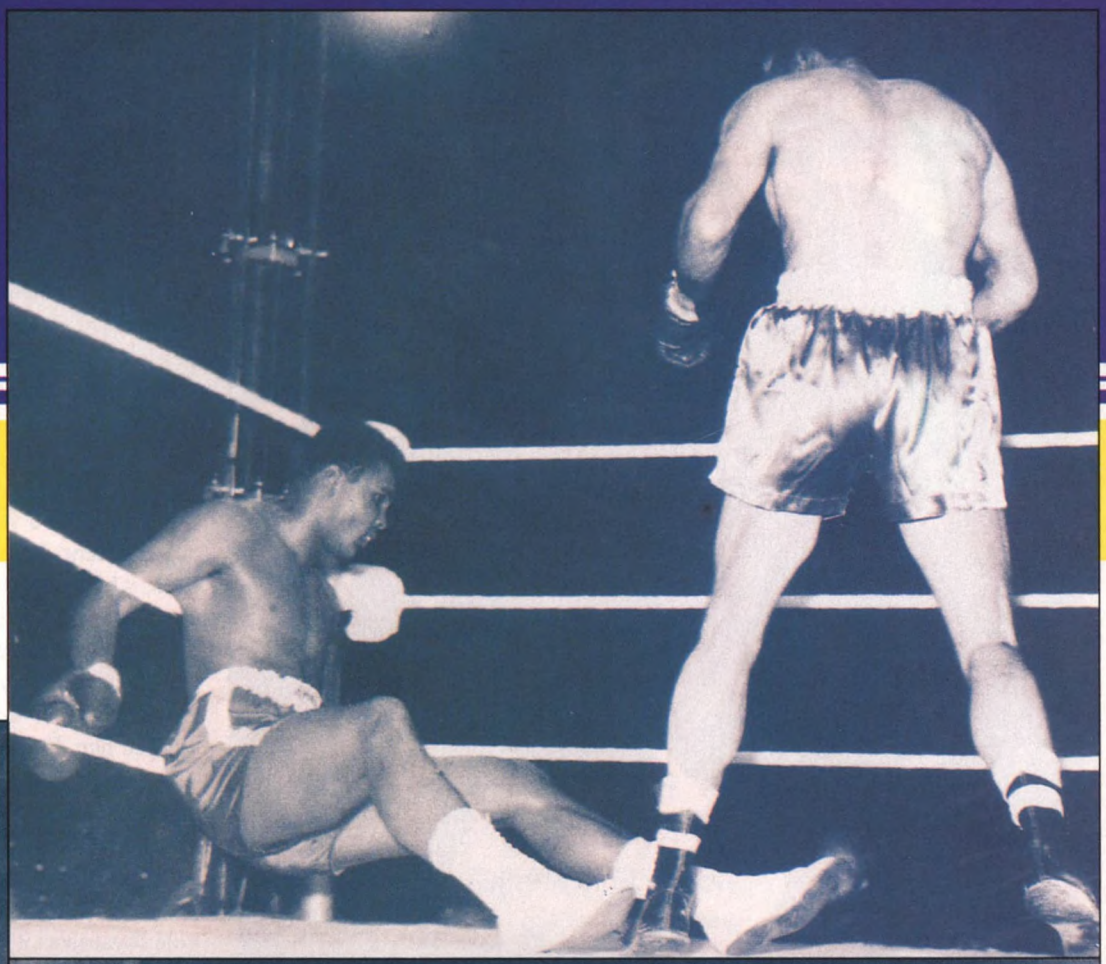
Sir Henry Cooper is the first knight of British boxing and the most popular fighter, still, ever to come from these shores.

Knocking down a certain Cassius Clay at Wembley Stadium on a June night in 1963 with the most talked-about single punch ever thrown in a British ring—his patented left hook, or 'Enery's 'Ammer as they called it—has something to do with his enduring appeal. But his grace, humility, honesty, and sociable nature are factors that are just as important in explaining his celebrity. The bloody finishes to some of his biggest fights—both encounters he had with Muhammad Ali ended with blood from deep cuts around his eyes streaming down his face and torso—endeared him even further to the public, for without this crippling handicap they felt he could have achieved much more than merely being British and Commonwealth heavyweight champion for a record 10 years. And why not? Ali always said that the blow Cooper





Cooper as he looked at his peak during the early-1960s (below) and as he appears today (left), still the most popular British fighter of all-time. In 1999, Cooper was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace.



Bloody good show: Cooper puts Muhammad Ali on the deck with a left hook near the end of the fourth round of their 1963 bout (top). Unfortunately for Cooper, Ali survived—with a bit of help from a torn glove—and came back to TKO a badly gashed Cooper in the fifth (above).

landed on him "shook up his kinsfolk in Africa" and, in more serious reflective moments, that it was the hardest single punch he sustained in his entire career.

"A lot of people now think I won that first fight with Ali because whenever it is replayed on television they usually just show the punch and Ali falling against the ropes with that glazed look on his face!" recalled Cooper, still recognizable from his heyday despite turning 67 on May 3. "Of course, I didn't actually. The bell saved him and he returned to his corner, where Angelo Dundee helped along a split in his glove and called over the referee, Tommy Little, to have it replaced so he would have more recovery time. It bought Ali over two minutes, which was a lifeline. To beat the count, they only give you 10 seconds.

"But I have no regrets about it. Ali went on to make history, and it couldn't have been any better for me if I actually had stopped him. I'm always happy to see him now. He gives me a big bearhug, and we square up for a bit of fun. Angelo, whom I now know very well, openly admitted to me over dinner one night what he did to the glove. What can I say? I don't wake up in a cold sweat about it!"

Cooper has too many other matters in his life to dwell for too long on an event that took place 37 years ago. His after-dinner speaking engagements keep him busy—"I have 5,000 photographs of myself printed every year for signing purposes, and they always seem to go"—as do his charity commitments, which he takes seriously.

"I've been chairman of the Variety Club Golf Society for the last 20 years. Ex-footballers, showbiz people, all sorts of personalities, we all do what we can to raise money for mentally and physically handicapped people," said Cooper. "Over 26 golf tournaments last year, we managed to raise £1-million. The money goes into buying Sunshine Coaches. Kids who have never been out of London, never been to the seaside, or never seen a cow in a field are brought to all sorts of places in the coaches we buy for their use. I've always said that if you've got kids who are strong and healthy and you see other kids who are brain dam-

Cooper's handicap isn't what it was back in 1971 when this photo was taken, but the former British, Empire, and European heavyweight champion still plays approximately 25 charity golf tournaments every year.

Cooper wasn't always the one covered in gore. In the 1959 battle in which he captured the British heavyweight title, Cooper bloodied Brian London en route to a decision victory. Cooper kept the title for 10 years, an all-time record.

aged or suffer from other disabilities, it's nice to be able to do something for them. The smile on their face after they've experienced something they might never have dreamed of is all the reward you need.

"I took up the golf properly after my retirement from boxing in 1971. My handicap's 11 at the moment. My best was seven about 18 years ago. When I get hold of the ball, I can give it a fair hit. It's a totally different game to boxing. The ball can't hit you back! But golf can be aggravating and frustrating, though it's always fascinating. When you went into a boxing ring or a gym, you could punch or skip rope or hit the speedball the same way. With golf you never know from one day to the next. You can play the front nine holes like a champ and the back nine like a chump. Cor blimey! It's such a mind game. You can think yourself into playing good and bad shots.

"But I enjoy it. I play two or three rounds of golf and walk 20 miles a week. It keeps me fit!"

Typically, Cooper makes light of the knighthood he received from Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, at Buckingham Palace in the 1999 New Year honors list in recognition of how his golf and other activities have benefited those less well off than himself.

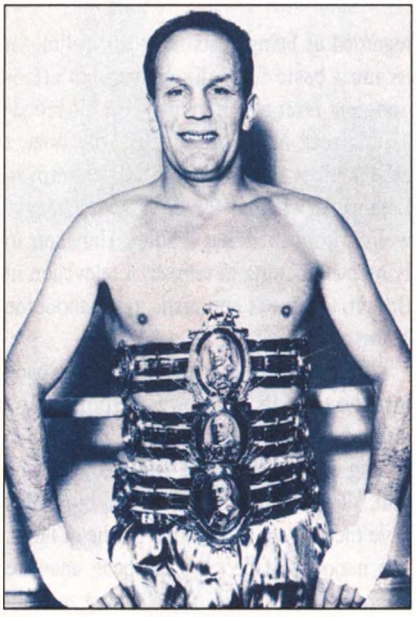
"You don't expect those things," he said. "Mum and Dad and dear old Jim Wicks, who managed me throughout my career, would have been over the moon. And it's great for boxing in this country. All the other sports like football and cricket have their knights, so I always say that my knighthood is an honor for the whole boxing game in this country."

For many years, Cooper, twice the BBC Sports Personality of the Year, worked as a ringside analyst for BBC radio. But the razzmatazz element to a sport he has always regarded as being at its most compelling in its most basic form diminished his affections and prompted him to vacate his broadcasting seat. Now that the BBC has done a deal with world heavyweight champion Lennox Lewis and Olympic super heavyweight gold medalist Audley Harrison to bring back boxing to terrestrial television in Britain, Cooper is optimistic again about the future of fist fighting.

"I'm delighted the BBC are getting back into boxing in a big way. Sports fans throughout the country will, I'm sure, be feeling exactly the same way about it," he said. "Too often in recent years, big fights have meant very little to the public at large. The majority of people have been unaware even of some of these fights having actually taken place.

"When I fought, people took great interest. Even the day I turned pro with my twin brother, George, in 1954, the BBC cameras

In his last fight, a 36-year-old Cooper lost a highly controversial decision to Joe Bugner in '71. When referee and sole arbitrator Harry Gibbs gave the fight to Bugner, it began a feud that lasted until two years ago when Cooper and Gibbs shook hands.



Cooper, the only fighter to win three Lonsdale belts outright, was forced to sell the belts when an investment with Lloyds of London went badly. Today, Cooper makes a comfortable living as an after-dinner speaker.

were there as we signed our contracts under the watchful eye of our dear old manager, Jim Wicks. And for the next 15 years, the BBC followed my career, which is why I built up the large following I had.

"People saw the big fights then. That's been the difference. The audience just isn't the same on satellite television. And that has taken something from boxing. The mass interest hasn't been there. It's not the topic of conversation with the ordinary man in the street. The average sports fan wouldn't even know most of the top fighters around today, and that's a great shame.

"But this is a great opportunity to put that right. It's very exciting for the sport. Boxing has needed a boost of this nature for some time, and this will be a terrific boost.

"Lennox Lewis and Audley Harrison on the BBC will, I'm sure, lead to more good, young prospects getting coverage as well. And people will start talking about the sport again, no doubt about it. The interest is certainly there. People's interest needs to be sustained or they will go and follow something else and get their entertainment from that.

"This is hopefully the dawn of a new era for the sport. People have been writing it off. People have always written it off. But boxing remains a sport that a substantial number of people in this country would take a keen interest in, given the opportunity."

There have not been many lows in Cooper's life, though his boxing career ended on a bitter note. After 15 rounds against Joe Bugner at Wembley Arena in 1971, most observers felt Cooper had clearly won to retain his British, Commonwealth, and European titles in a contest he had said in advance would be his last. But referee Harry Gibbs, the lone arbiter, raised Bugner's arm instead to cause one of the biggest controversies ever in a British ring and spark a feud that dissipated just months before Gibbs died two years ago.

"We were at a big charity function, and I had never really spoken with him after that night at Wembley. A friend of mine said he had an idea to raise some money for charity from everyone at the dinner," Cooper said. "He collected £20 from all the people for me and Harry to shake hands. We did. I'm not one really to hold grudges and I'm glad we made up. That was the first night I had really spoken to him in all those years."

A later setback came when Cooper had to sell his three gold Lonsdale belts (he is the only British fighter ever to win three outright for retaining his British title, and the rules now prevent a fighter owning more than one). Cooper had invested considerable money in the internationally renowned bank and insurance company Lloyds of London, and he found himself in a financial fix when they incurred serious losses.

"They wanted a lump of money, and the belts were in a vault, and I wasn't going to sell the house to pay them," Cooper explained."I suppose that's the gamble you take. A lot of wealthy people were in Lloyds, and I had four, five decent years out of it. But your losses always seem to be greater than your takings. I had hoped to pass on my belts to the kids, but unless I win the lottery now, I don't think I'll be doing that.

"I know the guy who bought them after they were put up for auction. He's given me first refusal if ever he sells them."

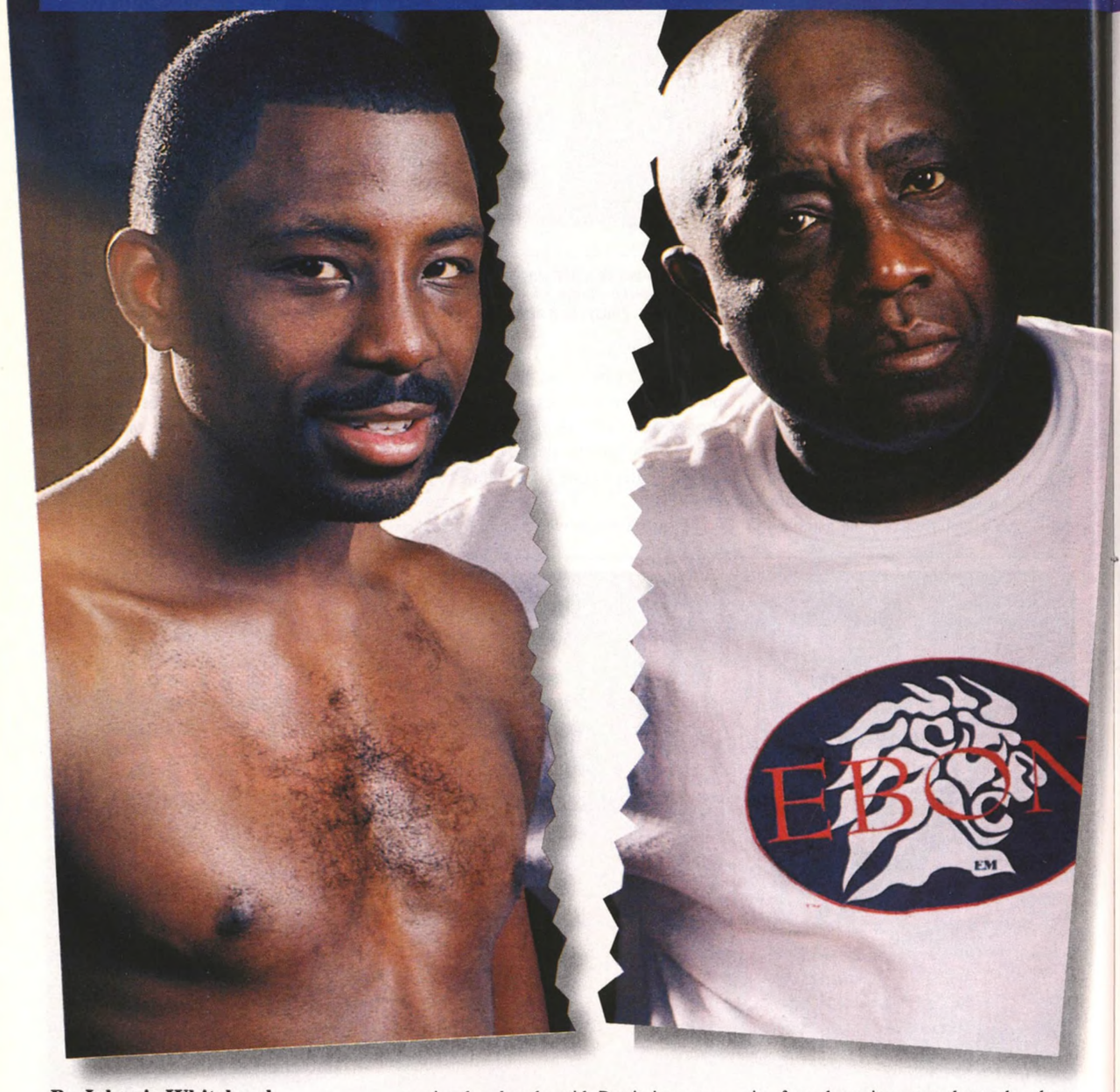
A national icon he may be, but he is a gentleman first and foremost, and when Sir Henry Cooper is in your company, it is difficult to do anything but the decent thing. ■

Brian Doogan is THE RING's European correspondent.

Cooper worked as a BBC ringside commentator, along with Harry Carpenter, for a number of years before souring on the show biz aspects of a sport he believes should be presented more traditionally. Today, he's as thrilled as everybody else that boxing is back on free TV in Britain.

His Career, His Relationships, His Reputation

CAN "TOO SHARP" JOHNSON PUT IT TOGETHER AGAIN?



By Johnnie Whitehead

This is a familiar story in boxing. Talented fighter can't get the recognition or the money he deserves. Yet he still trains, still toils, still fights, and still wins.

Eventually, though, victory can no longer soothe the frustration of being unappreciated and underpaid. Pessimism overrides optimism. Jaundice jettisons joy. And the sweet taste of victory, which he has experienced time and again, can no longer devour the bitter taste of defeat. No, this is not the type of defeat Mark "Too Sharp" Johnson endured back in his second professional fight—his only setback in 40 starts—but the kind that comes from within, from knowing your dream has been deferred. And it was all your fault.

"That was my lower self," said the former flyweight and junior bantamweight champion. "We all go through it I guess."

Sure, but not many travel to the depths that Johnson experienced in October 1999. Johnson, regarded by many as one of the best pound-for-pound fighters in the world, did something unthinkable when he busted someone's jaw in a heated dispute. No, this wasn't like when Mike Tyson butchered an old nemesis on a city sidewalk, or like the lucha libre-style dropkick Larry Holmes delivered from the hood of a hooptie. This happened in his Fort Washington, Maryland, home, and unlike those fistic follies, this one wasn't very funny.

"I blew up," Johnson said, following a short workout at Finley's Boxing Club in northeast Washington, D.C. "But I did it on the wrong person—I hit my wife."

It happened during the buildup for his fight with Raul Juarez at the D.C. Armory in Washington. Johnson had little time to actually prepare for the fight because he was too busy selling tickets, playing matchmaker with the undercard, and doing radio spots all over town to promote the show. It wasn't a big success, and the stress got the best of him, he says. When he arrived home one night, he had an argument with his wife. Bad words were spoken, a person he loved was hurt, and a career almost ended.

PHOTO BY RAY BAILEY

Johnson has reunited with his wife Samantha following his release from prison, where he spent 12 months for assaulting her and parole violation.

What followed for Johnson was a 12-month incarceration—nine were spent at a federal prison in Petersburg, Virginia—because marijuana found in his pocket violated his 1995 parole for cocaine possession. It gave him lots of time to do some soul-searching as he tried to piece together what went wrong. There was plenty of finger-pointing to go around, but there was only one person capable of making it all right again: Mark Johnson.

Johnson's first step came in Las Vegas the weekend of February 17 at the MGM Grand. He was flown in as a guest of music mogul James Prince, who officially would become his new manager, displacing father and now former manager Abraham "Ham" Johnson.

"All we do is voice our opinion," said the elder Johnson, downplaying the bumps in their relationship as of late. "He's not my son; he's my walking partner. I say something that's not to his liking; he tells me what he thinks, then we hash it out. We've always done that.

"We lost a lot of money when he went away. Now that we're back, I thought we were going to do what we set out to do. It's like losing one of your butt cheeks. I lost my better half, and something just doesn't feel right. That's hard to replace."

Prince, who had become infamous for luring "Pretty Boy" Floyd Mayweather from his father, finds himself with another gem that can further boost his reputation in an industry that has been reluctant to accept him.

"I'm an entrepreneur. That's what sets me apart [from the fathers]," Prince said. "I have a track record of being successful from a management point of view with artists' career. And with me being well off, I don't have a motive to cheat anybody out of their money.

"I'm going to get Mark the best available fights out there, but I'm not going to compare my work to his father's or belittle his father in any kind of way."

If Prince succeeds in getting Johnson those best available fights, he will become the first of Too Sharp's handlers to do so. According to Johnson, his most recent promoter, Cedric Kushner, didn't try hard enough to sell him to the networks and failed to take him from regional phenom, which is what he was with Forum Boxing, to the next level.

"There are things he could've done to put me on HBO," said Johnson, who made in the neighborhood of $125,000 per fight for Kushner, which was about what he made with Forum Boxing, the company that promoted him prior to Kushner. "He needed to make me a household name like he did Shane Mosley."

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Johnson has also split with promoter Cedric Kushner, pictured celebrating the fighter's 28th birthday shortly before he went to jail. It's all part of "Too Sharp's" attempt to kickstart his career and garner some big-money bouts before it's too late.

Countered Kushner: "The reason he didn't get the big fights is simple: He's not Japanese. He was a 112-pound U.S. kid. With the exception of Michael Carbajal, who came off the Olympics and had a golden start, it's been very difficult to market small weight Americans."

The promoter added that despite Johnson's immense talent, it was the litany of no-name, non-English-speaking opponents that made it impossible to move him. Kushner says he won't hold up Johnson's career despite a clause in Johnson's contract that would allow the promoter to extend the contract because the fighter was unavailable for 12 months.

Johnson appeared to be on the right track when he was with Forum Boxing, which built him into an attraction in California, where he mostly fought from 1993-'97. He went from fighting before a crowd of 50 in walkout bouts to main-event status. He was stablemates with Marco Antonio Barrera, and the two were destined to meet, but Johnson wanted to come back east. He also was swayed by a $50,000 signing bonus from the New York-based Kushner when he became a free agent—he was insulted that Forum Boxing didn't offer him one—but his career has been stuck in neutral ever since.

The most sensitive subject, however, has involved his father. Johnson claims it's nothing personal, but on one level it is, because it had a negative impact on their relationship. Ham can be a strong, in-your-face personality, and he wouldn't accept his demotion without a fight.

"Being locked up gave me time to understand how the boxing game is played," said Johnson. "All these fighters were getting made around me, without me. Me and my dad couldn't deal with HBO or other promoters. Maybe they didn't respect us, despite my talents. Now I'm letting [Prince] deal with all that. I'm going to just do the fighting."

That's one thing the ambidextrous southpaw has done better than anyone else in his weight range since the mid-'90s, and HBO is aware of it. Provided Johnson can lure a marquee opponent into the ring—a Tim Austin, Paulie Ayala, Bones Adams, Erik Morales, or Naseem Hamed—the network has him in its scope.

"He needs to show he still has the

MOVING?

Kindly give us 8 weeks advance notice

Are you moving? If so, please give us 8 weeks advance notice so we can continue to service your subscription promptly. Check the magazine(s) below to which you subscribe:

☐ BOXING 2001
☐ WORLD BOXING
☐ KO
☐ THE RING

NAME

OLD ADDRESS

CITY

STATE ZIP

NEW ADDRESS

CITY

STATE ZIP

EFFECTIVE DATE

CLIP THIS FORM AND SEND TO:
LONDON PUBLISHING CO.
P.O. BOX 2029, DEPT. 9
MARION, OH 43302

5385/09-00/4c

PHOTOS BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

It remains to be seen how much Johnson has left. Will he be the pound-for-pound entrant who blew away Jose Laureano in September 1998 (left) or the struggling fighter who was staggered by Jorge Lacierva (right) before prevailing via technical decision in August '99?

skills," said HBO Sports Vice President of Programming Kery Davis. "We would be interested if he's willing to fight the top fighters."

If that's all he needs to do, consider it done, Johnson says. He's about 125 pounds now and prefers to start his comeback at junior featherweight before moving up to featherweight.

"If I have to bulk up a bit, fine," he said. "I want to let everybody know I'm not only back, but ready to take on the best. These guys were afraid to fight me, but had I been with a network, it would've demanded them to fight. Maybe they'll assume I'm ring rusty and take a chance now."

But will his father still be in his corner? The relationship continues to be "rocky," the son says, but Ham has led him to a mark of 38-1 (26) with 1 no-contest. The way Ham sees it, he's "the mechanic" of a magnificent engine, and without him his son won't run on all cylinders.

Still, it's doubtful the pair can co-exist if their current pattern of behavior continues. They rarely make eye contact when the younger Johnson arrives for his morning workouts. Hardly a word is ever spoken between them—not even as much as a hello—and when the fighter's hands are wrapped it's by assistant/cutman Chris Ray. The elder Johnson stays on the periphery minding his other fighters, including Olympic bronze medalist and fledgling pro Clarence Vinson, who is Too Sharp's nephew.

"That's something me and my father are going to have to work out," said Johnson. "But I'm going to make the decisions I want to make. It's not about what he wants. It's just business."

Most of those close to the situation agree this is just a phase and things will work out when they look at the big picture.

Prince is star-gazing again, too, and with Johnson in his fledgling stable, he has his eyes set on a certain English featherweight who is the gatekeeper to the big money for the lighter classes. Prince already has Mayweather four pounds north, and with "Too Sharp" on board four pounds south, he thinks he has Naz boxed in.

"Mark can beat him," Prince said. "Naseem Hamed wouldn't fear him as much as he fears Pretty Boy. Eventually, he's going to have to come one of those directions, the right or the left, and I'm going to be right there waiting for him."

The key, of course, is whether two-division champion Johnson will be able to carry the same crippling power and speed at 122 that led him to the IBF flyweight title in 1996, when he pounded Francisco Tejedor inside of one round. Johnson at least looks the part. These days, he spends as many rounds in the mirror admiring his abdominals as he does on a heavybag. The six-pack he now proudly sports is a lasting image of the intense training regimen he kept while incarcerated—dips, pullups, pushups, and aerobics classes.

"I was in camp a whole year," said Johnson, who also ran at least three miles a day, five times a week, on the prison facility's track.

Soon, it'll be time to get beyond that outer shell—no matter how impressive it may be—and find out just what's left inside of Mark Johnson the fighter. He has reconciled with his wife, Samantha, and still maintains his businesses, his barber shop and his wife's beauty salon, both located in D.C.

"I'm blessed to have a second chance," he said. "Time heals all."

About a week after speaking with THE RING, there was a phone call at the gym for Johnson, who was there chatting and getting loose before an impromptu workout. The conversation was brief and to the point. It was his father. He said he'll be right over.

"I told you," Johnson said. "It's all going to work out." ■

Johnnie Whitehead is an editor at USA Today and a regular contributor to this magazine.

SUMMARY

HEAVYWEIGHTS

John Ruiz W 12 Evander Holyfield
(Wins WBA Title)
Mount Whitaker KO 2 Oleg Maskaev
Ray Mercer KO 2 Jeff Pegues
Tim Witherspoon KO 1 David Bostice
Friday Ahunanya W 12 Nate Jones
Dale Crowe KO 10 Greg Page
Robert Daniels W 6 Danny Wofford
Robert Davis W 8 Marion Wilson
Luan Krasniqi KO 3 Cleveland Woods
Jimmy Thunder KO 1 Jimmy Lister
Andre Purlett KO 2 Craig Payne
Michael Sprott W 8 Timo Hoffman
Tommy Martin W 8 Harold Sconiers
Przemyslaw Saleta KO 1 Josef Balogh
Alexander Gurov KO 7 Youri Yelistratov
Quinn Navarre W Disq. 6 Craig Branson
Jan Nortje KO 7 Monthee Honore
Tiwon Taylor KO 2 Casey Truesdale
Wade Lewis KO 1 Charlie Bishop
Dominick Guinn KO 4 Marvin Hunt
Calvin Brock KO 3 Zeb Kimbrough
Calvin Brock KO 1 Benjamin Garcia

CRUISERWEIGHTS

Vassiliy Jirov KO 1 Alex Gonzales
(Retains IBF Title)
Arthur Williams W 10 Gary Wilcox
Imamu Mayfield KO 6 Oscar Gomez
Graciano Rocchigiani W 8 Willard Lewis
Jorge Castro KO 6 Roberto Coelho
Bruce Scott KO 3 Gary Delaney
Pietro Aurino W 10 Alexej Trofimov
Sebastian Rothman KO 8 Adam Watt
Alain Simon KO 8 Milan Konecny
Earl Morais KO 10 Colin Abselon
Sean Fitzgerald W 8 Dan Sheehan

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS

Roy Jones KO 10 Derrick Harmon
(Retains Unified Title)
Montell Griffin KO 6 Ed Dalton
Antonio Tarver KO 5 Lincoln Carter
Glenn Kelly KO 10 Billy Lewis
Yory Boy Campas KO 4 Tony Menefee
Thomas Ulrich KO 8 Gabriel Hernandez
Demetrius Jenkins KO 3 Sammy Ahmad
Ole Klemetsen W Disq. 2 Thomas Hansvoll
Alejandro Lakatus W 12 Aaron Soria
Frederic Serrat KO 4 Ivica Cukusic
Kenny Bowman W 6 Dennis McKinney
Randy Griffin KO 1 Lamont Cooper

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Byron Mitchell KO 12 Manuel Siaca
(Regains Vacant WBA Title)
Thomas Tate W 10 Shannon Miller
Mads Larsen KO 7 Lloyd Bryan
Mads Larsen KO 2 Anthony Stephens
Aaron Davis KO 8 Vinny Paz
Adrian Dodson KO 3 Paul Jones
Anthony Mundine KO 6 Marc Bargero
Richard Grant Tech. Win 9 Vitali Kopitko
Joe Gatti W 8 Roberto Dellapenna
Kippy Warren KO 3 Jerome Hill
Xavi Moya KO 6 Santo Colombo
Jesse Marsh KO 5 P.C. James
Damon Hague W 8 Rob Stevenson
Jeff Lacy KO 1 Tommy Attardo
Laila Ali KO 5 Christine Robinson
Jacqui Frazier-Lyde KO 1 Genevia Buckhalter

MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Raul Marquez KO 5 Rob Bleakley
Erland Betare KO 3 Mohamed Boutalakht
Cristian Sanavia W 12 Jerry Elliott
Jonathan Corn KO 3 Marris Virgil
Sam Soliman W 6 Cornelius Carr
Larry LaCoursiere KO 3 Andre Lovett
Satoru Suzuki W 10 Minoru Horiuchi
Jesse Brinkley KO 2 Antonio Garcia

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Harry Simon KO 5 Wayne Alexander
Alex Bunema W 10 Tony Marshall
Roman Karmazin W 8 Mike Algoet
Manuel Gomez W 10
Miguel Angel Gonzalez
Thomas Damgaard KO 4
Humberto Aranda
Kirino Garcia KO 7 Frankie Randall
Tito Mendoza W 12 Julio Garcia
Fitz Vanderpool KO 3 Rosember Palacios

Corey Johnson W 8 Francisco Mendez
Steve Roberts KO 1 Sergio Acuna
Nader Hamdan KO 1 Pitak Kongoharen
Mikael Rask W 8 Paolo Sanchez
Takaloo W 12 James Lowther
Christophe Canclaux KO 1
Julien Ledoueron
Nobuhiro Ishida Tech. Win 11
Kookyul Song
Delroy Mellis KO 3 Alan Gilbert
Hiroyuki Yoshino KO 10
Toshiharu Kaneyama
Gary Jones W 8 Charles Clark

WELTERWEIGHTS

Shane Mosley KO 5 Shannan Taylor
(Retains WBC Title)
Andrew Lewis KO 7 James Page
(Wins Vacant WBA Title)
Thomas Damgaard W 8 Juan Rodriguez
Michele Piccirillo KO 3 Stanley Mabesi
Cory Spinks KO 2 Dennis Allen
Israel Cardona KO 2 Mike Rios
Jan Bergman KO 3 Joseph Makaringe
Hercules Kyvelos W 10 Charles Whittaker
Frederic Klose W 10
Antoine Ferreira de Brito
Yoshinori Takenaka KO 9 Ulysis Puzon
Luca Messi W 10 Alvaro Moreno
Nick Acevedo W 6 Richard Hall
Joe Haynes KO 3 Quan Robinson
Larry Mosley W 6 Roger Flores
Dante Craig KO 1 Jeremy Mickelson
Christy Martin W 10 Jeanne Martinez

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS

Antonio Diaz KO 4 Gilbert Quiroz
Ivan Robinson KO 8 Alric Johnson
Oktay Urkal W 10 Franco Ogentho
Emanuel Burton KO 10 Mike Griffith
Emanuel Burton KO 2 Orlando Milian
Khalid Rahilou W 8 Jean Marc Linguet
Allan Vester W 12 George Scott
Gianluca Branco W 10 Frederick Tripp
Gabriel Mapouka W 6 Freddy Cruz
Hicklet Lau KO 8 Wilfredo Negron
Masakazu Satake W 12 Masaaki Morooka
Luiz Freitas KO 4 Silvestre da Conceicao
Michael Warrick W 10 Awel Abdulai
Gary Balleto KO 1 John Scalzi
Anthony Washington W 8 Mambea Bakari
Julian Burford KO 3 Tony Fann
Juan Diaz W 6 Mahan Washington

LIGHTWEIGHTS

Takanori Hatakeyama D 12 Rick Roberts
(Retains WBA Title)
Artur Grigorian KO 6 Jose Angel Perez
Michael Ayers W 12 Wayne Rigby
Stefano Zoff KO 3 Kimoun Kouassi
Dennis Holbaek W 12 John Bailey
Djamel Lifa KO 5 Franck Requier
James Crayton W 10 Rogelio Castaneda
James Armah W 12 Bobby Vanzie
Julio Diaz W 10 Bernard Harris
Gabriel Ruelas W 8 Pedro Garcia
Alejandro Gimenez W 10
Victor Hugo Paz
Sandro Casamonica W 6 Sunday Aderoju
Tadashi Yuba Tech. Draw 5 Norio Kimura
Yoni Vargas KO 4 Israel Correa
Francisco Bojado KO 1 Alejandro Rivera
Miguel Cotto KO 1 Jason Ducet

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS

Jesus Chavez KO 7 Tom Johnson
Laszlo Bognar KO 9 Michael Gomez
Julio Pablo Chacon KO 5 Claudio Martinet
Carlos Navarro KO 7 Ubaldo Hernandez
David Santos W 10 Emmilio Alarato
Juan Arias KO 3 Steve Trumble
Tiger Ari W 12 Yohei Sugita
Edwin Santana KO 8 Ernest Koffi
Kinji Amano W 10 Koji Arisawa
Jason Pires W 6 Bobby Rishea

FEATHERWEIGHTS

Erik Morales W 12 Guty Espadas
(Wins WBC Title)
Derrick Gainer W 12 Victor Polo
(Retains WBA Title)
Juan Manuel Marquez KO 7
Sean Fletcher
Augie Sanchez KO 8 Daniel Jimenez
Juan Carlos Ramirez KO 2
Manuel Arellano
Jose Luis Valbuena KO 7 Pablo Estrella
Michael Alldis KO 6 Salem Bouaita
Daniel Jimenez W 12 Jose Quintana
Bobby Velardez W 10 Antonio Ramirez
David Murillo KO 6 Jorge Munoz
Anthony Tshehla KO 7
Jackie Gunguluza
Yuji Gomez KO 8 Toshikage Kimura
Cesar Figueroa KO 5 Ivan Feliciano
Rogers Mtagwa KO 6 Nelson Medina
Rocky Juarez KO 1 Michael Jones

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS

Lehlo Ledwaba KO 9 Arnel Barotillo
(Retains IBF Title)
Carlos Contreras Tech. Draw 7
Enrique Sanchez
Manny Pacquiao KO 5 Tetsutora Senrima
Ivan Alvarez W 12 Hugo Romero
Salim Medjkoune KO 7 Vladislav Antonov
Norihasa Tomimoto KO 7 Ricky Gayamo

BANTAMWEIGHTS

Tim Austin KO 6 Jesus Perez
(Retains IBF Title)
Veerapol Sahaprom KO 6 Roberto Lopez
(Non-Title Bout)
Adan Vargas W 12 Jorge Eliecer Julio
Johnny Bredahl W 12 Joel Junio
Ricardo Barajas KO 7 Kamel Guerfi
Pete Frissina W 12 Arthur Johnson
Fabien Guillerme W 12 Luigi Castiglione
Scotty Olson KO 3 Juan Manuel Chavez
Nicky Booth KO 7 Ady Lewis
Juan Domingo Cordoba W 10 Dario Azuaga
Gerardo Espinoza KO 3 Cristobal Valle
Brahim Asloum KO 6 Kenny Berrios

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS

Celes Kobayashi KO 10 Leo Gamez
(Wins WBA Title)
Mauricio Pastrana W 12 Jose Lopez
Diego Morales W 10 Francisco Tejedor
Oscar Andrade W 12 Debind Thapa
Raul Juarez W 12 Julio Cesar Avila
Hiroshi Nakano KO 3
Wanmeechok Kannorfasing

FLYWEIGHTS

Pongsaklek Wonjongkam KO 1
Malcolm Tunacao
(Wins WBC Title)
Damaen Kelly W 12 Paulino Villalobos
Jason Booth KO 2 Nokuthula Tshabangu
Daisuke Naito KO 5 Jun Carola
Liborio Romero KO 1 Iran Ethridge

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS

Rosendo Alvarez W 12 Bebis Mendoza
(Wins WBA Title)
Melchor Cob-Castro W 12 Fernando Luna
Baby Jake Matlala KO 4 Todd Makelin
Pilkoo Kang KO 11 Koki Tanaka
Ivan Calderon KO 1 Sergio Diaz

STRAWWEIGHTS

Ernesto Rubillar KO 7 Zarlit Rodrigo

RINGSIDE REPORTS

FIGHTER *of the* MONTH

They say two heads are better than one. It follows, then, that six heads should be really damned awesome, and as we found out on February 17, he is.

Andrew "Six Heads" Lewis came into the ring at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas essentially an unknown quantity and about an even-money bet to beat tough, hard-hitting James Page for the vacant WBA welterweight title. Once the bell rang, the odds suddenly changed. Only 15 seconds into the fight, HBO analyst Emanuel Steward stated that Page didn't have a prayer, and he was right. Lewis was too fast, too slick, too pumped, and too powerful, and he dominated almost every second of the bout.

Page had been beaten three times previously, but they were all decision losses in the early stages of his career. This time, he was dropped in the second round and floored again and halted midway through the seventh, losing every round along the way. Even when Page's vaunted left hook landed, Lewis somehow shook it off and went about his business of pounding him. Just like that, Lewis went from little-known prospect to ferocious champion, and from being the fighter with the nifty nickname, to being the Fighter of the Month.

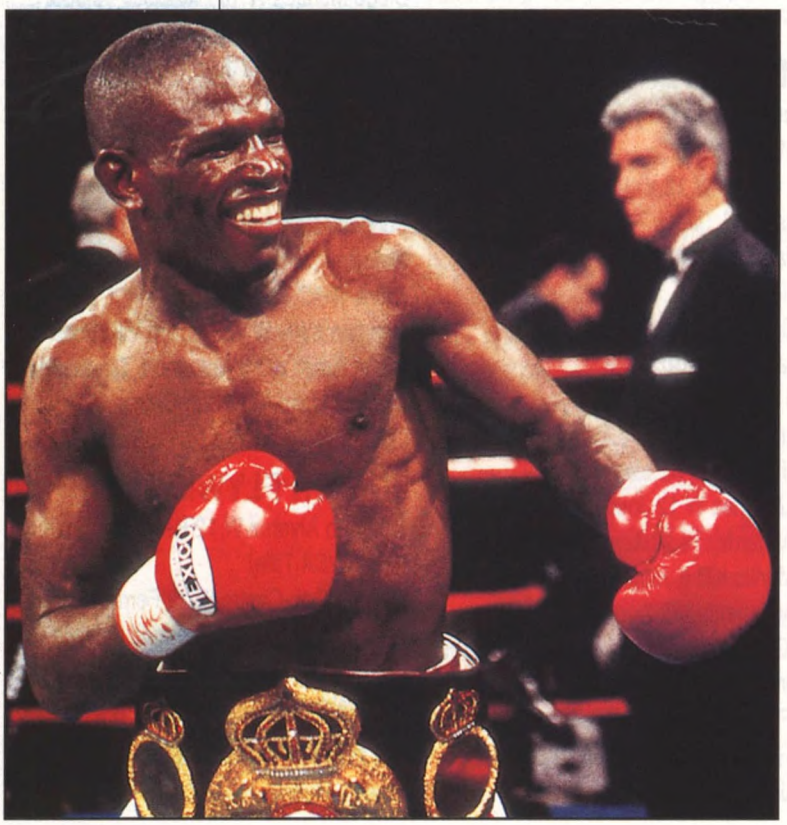


PHOTO BY HOLLY STEIN/HBO

Andrew Lewis

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Jones outclasses Harmon in another ho-hummer

Roy Jones KO 10 Derrick Harmon

Tampa, Florida: Jones took the ninth round off, and still won it decisively. That's how one-sided his fourth defense of the unified light heavyweight title (and eighth defense since regaining the WBC belt from Montell Griffin), against Harmon at the Ice Palace, was. Harmon's corner, believing that he had ruptured an eardrum, would not let their fighter continue after the 10th.

It was a typical Jones title defense in which he underperformed against an unheralded, undeserving southpaw with no conceivable chance of winning. For 10 rounds, Jones, 44-1 (36), landed every punch in his repertoire at will, but seemed almost bored and unwilling to step up his intensity level to score a knockout. Each time he rocked Harmon, he was content to let him off the hook.

Jones, 174, Pensacola, Florida, started the fight cautiously, allowing Harmon, 174½, Chicago, Illinois, to be the aggressor while picking him apart with strategic counters. At the end of the opening round, he gave Harmon a taste of his hand speed with a blinding flurry that delighted the crowd of more than 14,000. By the third round, Jones, 32, had found the range for lead rights to the head, which he used to take potshots at Harmon from a distance.

Harmon, 31, found a measure of success with overhand lefts to Jones' head and bodyshots with both hands, but nothing had enough power on it to be of any hindrance to the champ. The outclassed challenger tried to turn up the heat in the fourth, but Jones adeptly sidestepped his charges and countered. The fifth and sixth rounds saw Jones casually toying with Harmon as if he was a sparring partner. The champion turned southpaw occasionally, while continuing to tattoo Harmon with both fists to the head and body. Jones even tried his hand at a bolo punch or two that missed the mark.

Jones accelerated his attack in the seventh and eighth, working Harmon over with rapid-fire combinations upstairs and down. In between flurries, he jolted Harmon with left and right uppercuts, left hooks, and overhand rights for which the tough but limited challenger simply had no answers. Still, as dominant as Jones was, he exercised more caution than necessary and seemed reluctant to commit to any meaningful exchanges.

"My motto is if I hit you and you take it, I'm going to hit you six more times," Jones said. "If you take that, I'll hit you six more times again. Sooner or later, you ain't going to be able to take it no more."

After coasting through the ninth round, Jones resumed his attack in the 10th, exploding with more two-fisted flurries to the head. A weary Harmon, 20-2 (10), finally called it quits at round's end. All three judges had Jones winning every round. There were no knockdowns. The referee was Frank Santore (USA).

Jones' only worthy opponent left at light heavyweight is Dariusz Michalczewski. Asked if he intended to fight the Germany-based Pole, Jones responded: "I don't know. Is he ever going to come to the United States? I ain't fighting no German in Germany." Jones cited Antonio Tarver, who knocked out previously unbeaten Lincoln Carter in the fifth round on the undercard, as a possible next opponent.

Television: HBO
Promoter: M & M Sports
(2-24-01)
Peter Lim

Derrick Gainer W 12 Victor Polo

Tampa, Florida: In a battle of southpaws, "Smoke" Gainer successfully defended the WBA featherweight title for the first time, defeating Polo via an unpopular split decision at the Ice Palace. Gainer fought defensively throughout, sticking and moving and trying to avoid mixing it up with the aggressive Colombian.

Gainer, 37-5 (23), had difficulty getting into a rhythm early in the fight. It was Polo, 29-3-2 (22), who was doing most of the punching in the early rounds, as he stalked Smoke across the ring and unloaded with both fists when Gainer's back was against the ropes. Gainer circled the ring and attempted to take potshots at Polo, but met with only limited success. In the third round, Polo's best, he trapped Gainer on the ropes on several occasions and relentlessly unleashed barrages to the head and body. But despite his respectable knockout percentage, the challenger's punches seemingly carried little weight.

The turning point in the fight came in the fourth. Finally getting into a groove, Gainer began finding the range and tim-

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Polo pops Gainer en route to losing split decision

ing for sharp counterpunches. In the middle of the round, three hard lefts to the face stopped Polo in his tracks. Fazed by Gainer's newfound success, Polo began swinging wild punches, most of which were easily dodged or blocked by the champion.

Gainer, 125½, Pensacola, Florida, dominated rounds five through seven with accurate sharp-shooting from long range. Time and again, he drove Polo, 125¾, back with quick right-lefts and then slipped away before Polo could retaliate. Good head and lateral movement on Gainer's part ensured that he was an elusive target for Polo, who was becoming increasingly frustrated.

But Polo, 30, came back strongly in the eighth with a stinging right jab, a punch that was all but nonexistent until this juncture in the fight. Beating Gainer, 28, to the jab, he managed to close the distance and was actually outboxing the slick champion in the round. Had Polo not abandoned the jab in the subsequent rounds, he might have walked away with the belt.

The action slowed in rounds nine and 10, with Gainer taking the rounds off to circle and run without throwing punches—a move that drew boos from the crowd.

The 11th was the best round of the bout. Early in the round, Polo pinned Gainer on the ropes and bludgeoned him with hooks to the head and body. But just when it looked like the challenger was coming on, Gainer uncorked a big left cross followed by a shove that sent Polo to the canvas for the only knockdown of the fight and a valuable 10-8 round for Gainer.

The final round was relatively uneventful, with Gainer keeping his distance, while sniping with jabs and straight lefts.

The decision—115-112 for Gainer by Hubert Earle (Canada), a ridiculous 118-109 for Gainer by Frank Skilbred (USA), and an even more absurd 114-113 for Polo by Hector Hernandez (Mexico)—drew a prolonged boo from the crowd. THE RING scored the fight 116-111 for Gainer.

The referee was Brian Garry (USA).
Television: HBO
Promoter: M & M Sports
(2-24-01)
Peter Lim

Yosam Choi KO 7 Saman Sorjaturong

Seoul, South Korea: Slick-punching Korean Choi, 107¾, displayed his great improvement and impressively kept the WBC light flyweight throne for the second time as he effectively battered ex-champ Sorjaturong, 106¼, Thailand. Choi floored him for the count with a single solid jab at 1:17 of the seventh round at Central City Millennium Hall. This outstanding victory raised his ledger to 23-1 (12), and Sorjaturong dropped to 45-4-1 (34).

Sorjaturong, 31, failed to regain the title he had lost to the Korean in October '99. Choi, 28, took the initiative from the start with his accurate combinations and tight defense.

Though Sorjaturong often attempted to land his vaunted powerpunches, Choi generally had him at bay with sharp and strong combinations to the face and midsection, sweeping all rounds prior to the stoppage. The champ made Sorjaturong groggy with a fusillade of punches, as he was stalking him from one side of the ring to the other in the sixth.

A well-timed jab from Choi midway through the seventh had Sorjaturong down on the deck, his right eye seemingly in pain. The Thailander could not will himself to beat the count of Mexican referee Lupe Garcia.

Through six rounds, Marty Denkin (USA) and Malcolm Bulner (Australia) both scored the fight 60-54, and Masakazu Uchida (Japan) had it 60-53, all in favor of the vastly improved Choi.

Promoter: Madam Yongja Shim's Viva Promotions
(1-30-01)
Joe Koizumi

Kostya Tszyu KO 7 Sharmba Mitchell

Las Vegas, Nevada: Mitchell knew the path to the unified 140-pound championship went through Tszyu. What he didn't know was that he would not be able to maneuver around Tszyu when the two finally met.

Mitchell, 47-3 (29), had to surrender the WBA super lightweight title while sitting on the stool after tearing the anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee, ending his fight with WBC champion Tszyu, 26-1-1 (22), at the Mandalay Bay after seven rounds. Mitchell, who had surgery on the same knee two years ago, reinjured it the day before the contest. The pain was bad enough that Mitchell nearly didn't fight. But eventually, without the mobility to keep him away from the onrushing Tszyu, his corner finally decided to call it a night.

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Tszyu and Mitchell exchange shots to the head

"You would have to kill me to get to me to quit," Mitchell, attempting his fifth title defense, said. "That's not me. My corner was looking out for me. They kept telling me, 'You can fight again another day.' But that's not what I wanted. I thought I'd be able to hang in there and get him in the later rounds."

The hard-hitting Tszyu, making his third defense of the WBC belt, was a 4-1 favorite and he spent much of the night on a relentless chase forward. Mitchell's plan was to use his lateral movement and circle Tszyu in an effort to neutralize his power.

His knee, however, caused that strategy to be problematic. Mitchell, 139, Takoma Park, Maryland, didn't have the quickness to move as he wished, and by moving as much as he was early, it was taking that much more out of him. Tszyu, 140, Australia via Russia, didn't help matters by wrestling with Mitchell and flinging him to the canvas several times. Referee Joe Cortez (USA) deducted a point from Tszyu for roughhousing in the fourth round, but Tszyu continued to get physical.

"He was coming in with his head, and if he came up, I would have possibly been cut," Tszyu, 31, said. "I just pushed his head down when he did that so he didn't come up and cut me."

By the time the 30-year-old Mitchell went back to the stool after the seventh, his knee was already beginning to swell and he was also having a problem with a hamstring. He protested the decision to stop the fight, believing he was in good shape on the scorecards, but the corner felt he was diminished enough that he could get hurt.

Only judge Keith MacDonald (USA) agreed with Mitchell's version of events, as he had it 66-66 at the time of the stoppage. Chuck Giampa (USA) and Daniel Van de Wiele (Belgium) both favored Tszyu, by scores of 68-64 and 68-65 respectively.

Television: Showtime
Promoter: Don King Productions
(2-3-01)
Kevin Iole

Takanori Hatakeyama D 12 Rick Roberts

Tokyo, Japan: Hatakeyama, 135, Japan, barely kept the WBA lightweight belt in his first defense, as he fell behind in the early going and desperately hustled to sweep the last four rounds. His late rally earned him a split draw with Roberts, 135, Japan via New York, over 12 hard-fought rounds at Ryogoku Sumo Arena. Judge Federico Villamer (Venezuela) scored the fight 116-111 for Hatakeyama, Jesus Cova (Venezuela) had it 115-112 for Roberts, and legendary ex-champ Alexis Arguello (Nicaragua) turned in a 114-114 card. After the well-received draw, Hatakeyama is 24-1-3 (19), and Roberts' record stands at 38-3-2 (20).

The 36-year-old Roberts, who uses the last name "Yoshimura" in Japan, fought much better than expected with his stick-and-move strategy, which was effective against the aggressive champ and appeared to earn him the third through eighth sessions. Roberts, who had registered 22 defenses of the Japanese national 135-pound title before moving to Florida by military order last year, was supported by some ardent fans here, and befuddled the champ with his trademark jabs.

Aware that he was behind on points, Hatakeyama, 25, furiously accelerated his attack, pinning Roberts to the ropes with barrages of punches to win the last four rounds. The ninth round was especially critical, as Roberts held the champ's arm

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Morales catches Espadas with a right en route to controversial win

so often that referee Ken Morita (Japan) took away a point. Hatakeyama barely kept the belt by making up five points in the last four rounds.

Promoters: Kazunori Miyakawa's Yokohama Hikari Promotions, Akihiko Honda's Teiken Promotions

(2-17-01)

Joe Koizumi

Erik Morales W 12 Guty Espadas

Las Vegas, Nevada: Morales' nickname is "El Terrible," but there were many who thought Morales was just plain terrible when he challenged Espadas at the MGM Grand for the WBC featherweight championship. Morales was the house fighter and, despite being the challenger, was introduced to the crowd last. And he got the benefit of the hometown call in a close fight for the second time in just under a year. American judges Jerry Roth and Dave Harris favored Morales by 116-112, while Dick Flaherty had it 115-113 for the former 122-pound champ. THE RING card favored Espadas, 115-113.

Espadas, 124½, Mexico, was busier and landed more punches. Morales, 125, seemed content to box Espadas and wasn't eager to get into the wars that have made him Mexico's most popular active fighter. There were a few memorable exchanges—the two spent the final 30 seconds of the second round swapping big shots to the head—but by and large, it was hardly a Morales-type fight.

"He threw a lot of punches, he had a lot of heart," Morales, 40-0 (31), said. "But I landed the harder punches and I also outboxed him. I thought I was always in control of the fight, but he did get me with a very hard shot at the end."

Morales, 24, was referring to the 11th, when Espadas, 26, managed to rip an uppercut down the middle that wobbled Morales and sent him into the ropes for much of the final 30 seconds of the round. The 12th round was even worse for El Terrible, as he seemed fatigued and had to hold repeatedly down the stretch.

Espadas, though, didn't have the shot in him to take Morales out, and on this night, he needed it. Morales is one of the stars in the Las Vegas-based Top Rank's stable, which Espadas alluded to after the bout.

"Obviously he's not as terrible as he says he is if he comes here to run instead of fight," Espadas said. "He didn't want to fight. I had to go chase him. Obviously, here you're not going to win a decision against him."

Morales was a huge favorite, closing as an 11-1 choice against the reigning but widely unknown champion. Espadas, 33-3 (21), however, showed in his second title defense that he is hardly a fluke. He took the best Morales had to give and gave even more. But though he thought he won, he wasn't going to carp about the decision.

"In my heart I know I won the fight," Espadas said. "He ran all night. He knew I won the fight. But I can take a defeat. I am a champion. The decision was with the judges. There's no beef here."

Morales, whom many believed gained a gift win over Marco Antonio Barrera in a wild fight last year, was clearly relieved to have gotten the call. And he refused to apologize for fighting a more technical fight than usual.

"The public always wants to see a war," Morales said. "I didn't have to struggle and make that kind of fight because I had the stamina to go the 12 rounds."

The referee was Jay Nady (USA).

Television: HBO

Promoter: Top Rank

(2-17-01)

Kevin Iole

Lehlo Ledwaba KO 9 Arnel Barotillo

Carnival City, South Africa: IBF junior featherweight champion Ledwaba showed a superb left jab en route to flooring challenger Barotillo in the ninth round and battering him into defeat moments later, when referee Rudy Battle (USA) stepped in and halted the fight at the 2:40 mark. A crowd of approximately 5,000 was on hand at the Carnival City Gambling Resort

for Ledwaba's fourth successful title defense.

In the first round, Barotillo, 122, Australia via the Philippines, surprised Ledwaba, 121, as he backed the champion up with a furious attack to edge the round. But a composed Ledwaba, 29, came back in the second round and scored with stiff jabs to the head, turning Barotillo defensive as he tried to slip and dip. This was the pattern of the rest of the fight, with the 26-year-old Barotillo never really in contention after his promising opening round.

Again and again, Ledwaba jabbed and followed with painful lefts and rights to the body of the challenger. By the fifth round, with a cut over his left eye and a welt under his right, Barotillo was in a painful trance. Through rounds six, seven, and eight, the Filipino bravely pushed forward, but he was paying the price for his courage, with his face bloodied and swelling noticeably.

Late in the ninth, Ledwaba, 32-1-1 (22), landed a looping left hook to the head, which sent Barotillo, 25-11-3 (18), reeling across the ring before crashing to the canvas. He got up, but the unrelenting champion poured it on, and the challenger was being battered by vicious lefts and rights along the ropes until Battle stepped in to call the fight off.

Promoter: Rodney Berman

(2-17-01)

Ron Jackson

Aaron Davis KO 8 Vinny Paz

Ledyard, Connecticut: You always knew it was going to end this way. Eventually there was going to be a night when indomitable courage and unquenchable desire just wouldn't be enough. Some night, the style built on razzle-dazzle and showmanship would run headlong into a foe with superior hand speed and power, and age would've taken that little bit extra away, and it wouldn't be pretty.

Paz' latest comeback attempt ended in blood-drenched defeat at the Foxwoods Casino, where former welterweight champion Davis picked him apart for eight rounds with surgical precision. Paz, 167, Cranston, Rhode Island, at age 38 and returning from a 15-month layoff occasioned by the hand he broke before his decision loss to Dana Rosenblatt in '99, actually displayed vintage footwork and looked slim. But Davis, 33, had a superb game plan based primarily on using his left jab to upset Paz' rhythm, then going inside and up the middle with crunching left hooks and uppercuts.

By round two, Paz' nose was bleeding profusely, and soon Davis, 168, Bronx, New York, had opened a cut over his right eye as well. Paz, 46-9 (29), kept pressing with increasing desperation, but Davis, 48-6 (31), remained calm and continued busting him up with short counterpunches.

"I'd jab when he stepped to the side, and then use the uppercuts because of the way he locks his legs," Davis said afterward. "Vinny is hard to hit with right hands, and when he counters with his right he often butts you coming in, so I didn't use many rights at all. I took my time and broke him down."

Paz' fury was unabated before a sellout crowd of 1,700 in the Fox Theater, and his looping hooks might've won a round or two in the middle. But Davis' methodical dissection was

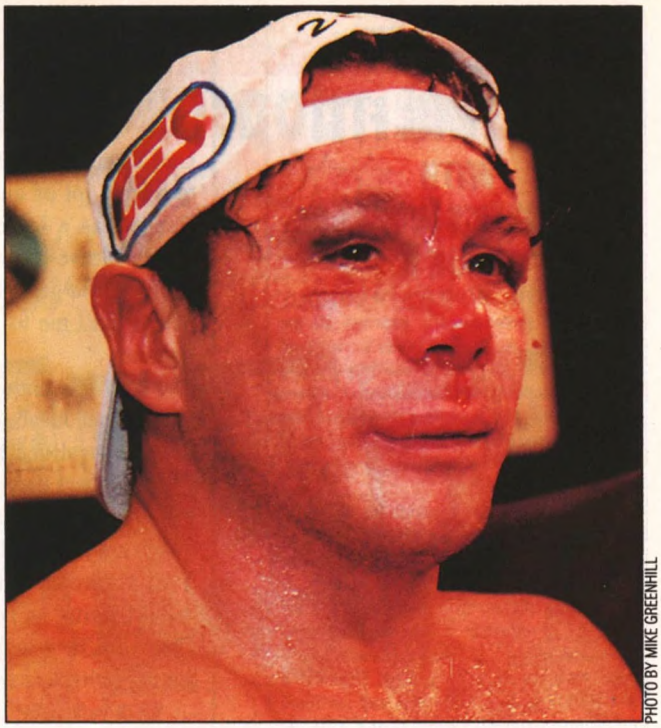


PHOTO BY MIKE GREENHILL

Paz looks pitiful following defeat to Davis

steady and brutal, and when a gash over the left eye began to add more gore to the scene in the seventh, referee Frank Cappuccino (USA) told the Paz corner they had better get it stanched. A minute into the eighth, with more gore splattering ringsiders, Cappuccino called in Dr. Michael Schwartz, who advised Cappuccino to end it.

"I knew Vinny Paz was tough, but I didn't know he could take punches like that," said a gracious Davis. "It was a brutal fight with him standing there taking punishment. I didn't know why his corner or the ref wouldn't stop it."

Scorecards from the three American judges revealed Paz would have needed to kayo the never-knocked-out Davis to win. Melvina Lathan had it a Davis shutout, while Don O'Neill and Steve Epstein saw it 69-64 Davis. The CompuBox numbers were more overwhelming, with Davis landing 38 percent of his blows to just 13 percent for Paz.

A couple of days later, Paz confidant Jimmy Burchfield, who promoted the show, indicated no decision had been made regarding the fighter's future. "Nobody who regards themselves as a friend of Vinny ever wants to see him go through this kind of thing again," Burchfield said, "but ultimately, it's his decision. I didn't want Aaron Davis and I made that clear—I wanted him to fight someone easier after 15 months off. But Vinny told me, 'I don't want to fight that way. My fans pay good money to see me.' Davis executed well; he was fully prepared and at the top of his game, while Vinny had a terrible night."

After an 18-year career including two world titles, there's no need to prove anything more. No boxer ever gets the decision over time's inexorable march. Thanks for the memories, Vinny, but it is time for the bleeding to stop.

Television: ESPN2

(2-9-01)

Jay N. Miller ■

NOW GET FIGHTING FIT!

WITH THE BOXER'S WORKOUT BOOK!

THE BOXER'S WORKOUT clearly and systematically presents all the elements of a sound boxer's workout program, with unprecedented step-by-step photo-illustrations of the essential moves and punches. It was written by writer-boxer Peter DePasquale, with veteran coaches Al Gavin and Bob Jackson of New York's Gramercy Boxing Gym.

If you're a novice boxer, you'll use **THE BOXER'S WORKOUT** to practice the basics your coach has taught you until they become second nature. If you're an experienced boxer, you'll use the book as a refresher course to keep your technique sharp. If you're a coach, you'll want your boxers to have **THE BOXER'S WORKOUT** to complement and reinforce the training you give them in the gym. If you're a white collar boxer, you'll find **THE BOXER'S WORKOUT** an invaluable training partner. And if you're a boxing fan, **THE BOXER'S WORKOUT** will make you an even more intelligent observer of the sport.

The book covers all you need to know: Preconditioning, roadwork, diet, equipment, when and where to train, training at home, health club or serious boxing gym, proper hand wrapping, balanced stance, correct movement, the thinking and psychology behind punches and moves, left jab, straight right, right cross, upper cut, left hook, combinations, blocking, parrying, slipping, opportunistic defense, counterpunching, developing your personal boxing style, the training circuit, warm-up, shadowboxing, mirror training, heavy bag, speed bag, jump rope, stomach routine, medicine ball and more. Guidelines on sparring and competition.

Over 80 photo-illustrations. Featured book excerpt in *Men's Health* and *Men's Fitness* magazines. A "must have" classic for anyone involved in any aspect of boxing.

THE BOXER'S WORKOUT now comes with the exclusive **FIGHTING FORM POSTER**, the visual guide to perfect boxing form. **FREE** with you order! (Sorry, we cannot ship the poster to correctional facilities).

HOW TO ORDER

BY CHECK OR MONEY ORDER: Send you name and street address along with $14.95 plus $3.50 shipping and handling to: **FIGHTING FIT, INC., P.O. BOX 021334 BROOKLYN, NY 11202-0029, DEPT. 19**

BY MAJOR CREDIT CARD: Send your name, address, phone number and credit card information with expiration date to the above address or e-mail us at

fightingfit@email.msn.com

International orders, please e-mail us for shipping rates.

New Face

(Continued from page 16)

have a problem with that now, but I used to have a lot of questions about myself. There was a lot of frustration, but I couldn't leave boxing alone. I have to get really hurt to get out. Someone is going to have to kill me to get me out of boxing right now."

Part of his drive stems from the Judah blood. Yoel Judah, the strong patriarch of seven boys, always kept imploring his sons to be the best they could be. Three years ago, when Daniel wavered about his future in boxing and sought his father's advice, Yoel immediately told him to quit if he wasn't going to commit himself fully. Otherwise, he was facing the possibility of getting seriously hurt in the ring.

"It wasn't important whether or not Daniel boxed," said Yoel, who trains both Zab and Daniel, as well as former WBA welterweight champ James Page. "I wanted him to make sure that's what he wanted to do. He didn't have to follow his brother. Daniel had to do what he wanted to do. He had to box for himself. I don't carry any of my sons; they have to carry their own weight. Daniel is a strong worker and has a good head on his shoulders. Boxing is life or death, and he had to learn that."

Daniel's period of uncertainty was tough for Zab to endure. His goal had always been for him and Daniel to rule professional boxing together, just the way they had the New York City Golden Gloves in the early-1990s. Daniel quitting was inconceivable to Zab.

"I remember all of us talking about it," Zab said. "But the first thing you have to know about Daniel is that he is a very strong individual. With all my brothers, I feel like Daniel could hold his own the most. 'Everything happens for a reason,' my father kept telling both of us. There was a time in '96 when I felt like quitting. But my father kept saying, 'Winners don't quit and quitters don't win.' There are no quitters in our family.

"For Daniel, it was about recovering and coming back. There is always positivity for someone you love, no matter how hard things are. Daniel just had to stay focused. Daniel is good at what he does and he's going to be great. And even though he's older than me, I feel like his older brother. I don't want anything bad to happen to Daniel. I want to set a path for him."

The two are more like best friends than half-brothers. Daniel teases Zab about the rapid-fire way he speaks, and Zab gets mad at Daniel for being so much bigger than he is.

"I'm bigger than him, and he's so small, so he calls me a jolly, big, green giant," Daniel said, laughing.

The bond between the two has always

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Judah works toward a decision win over Kevin Russell

been there, though they did have their testy times in their youth, as most brothers do. Although Yoel vehemently prohibited the boys from hitting each other, Daniel and Zab would still get into brotherly brawls every once in a while.

One instance, Zab remembers with a laugh, happened when the boys were in their early-teens. They had been fist fighting with each other all day in the house, unbeknownst to Yoel—"who would've beat both our butts if he found out," Zab said. Daniel ran outside, only to have Zab chase after him minutes later.

"I hear all of this yellin' down the street, and I saw Daniel in the middle of the these guys, like they were gettin' ready to jump him," Zab said. "I jumped in, and Daniel and me kicked their asses. I can say something to Daniel; Daniel can say something to me. But don't let anyone else try it."

Max Kellerman, ESPN2's studio analyst for *Friday Night Fights*, thinks Daniel has the potential to one day compete for a title. Kellerman, however, makes one thing clear: "Daniel doesn't have the natural athleticism of his brother. But he does have ability and he's improving fight to fight. But I don't see the same potential in him as I saw in Zab at the same stage of his career.

"What Daniel has shown at the pro level, though, is surprising power. He can absolutely be a contender. He doesn't do any one specific thing well that jumps out at you, like Zab's incredible speed, but Daniel does a lot of things well overall. With a guy like Zab, it was easier to predict good things, but it's not out of the question for Daniel. The question is what happens when he fights better guys."

And although his brother is on the verge of possibly becoming the unified 140-pound champion with a victory over WBA/WBC super lightweight champ Kostya Tszyu, Daniel says he is in no rush for a title belt. He's willing to be patient and willing to keep working toward that goal.

If Daniel does not reach the heights his brother has, it doesn't matter, because in many ways Daniel will always be a winner due to "Zab being a part of me, and me being a part of him, and that's inside both of us," Daniel said. "When you see Zab in the ring, you see a part of Daniel Judah. When you see Daniel Judah, you see a part of Zab. We act the same and we think the same. Nothing can change that. That's blood." ■

THE RING & KO PRESENT

GIANT-SIZED FOLDOUT SPECIALS

Includes. . .
A LIFE-SIZE 22" X 32" EIGHT-PAGE SUPER CENTERFOLD!

Stories, Records, Fight Facts, Analyses, And More!

- TYSON vs. SPINKS
- HOLYFIELD vs. FOREMAN
- LEONARD vs. HEARNS II
- LEONARD vs. DURAN III
- MIKE TYSON & THE HEAVYWEIGHT GREATS

ONLY $5
$21.95
FOR ALL FIVE!

Send money order or make check payable to:
London Publishing Co.
P.O. Box 910
Ft. Washington, PA 19034

The RING & KO PRESENT

Please send me the *Color Special* I've checked below. I am enclosing $5 for each one I'm ordering, or $21.95 for all five.

☐ Tyson vs. Spinks ☐ Holyfield vs. Foreman ☐ Leonard vs. Hearns II ☐ Leonard vs. Duran III ☐ Tyson & The Heavyweight Greats

Name _____

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____

For all orders outside the U.S., you must add $1.50 for every issue to be delivered by surface mail, or $3 for every issue to be sent air mail. International money orders in U.S. funds only. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

5353/09-00

WORLDWIDE RATINGS

The ratings of the three major governing bodies recognized by The Ring are supplied by the organizations themselves. They are updated on these pages as soon as they are made available to us. In this issue, the WBA ratings were compiled as of January 2001, the WBC as of February 2001 and the IBF as of January 2001.

HEAVYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Lennox Lewis (GB)	C	–	C
Evander Holyfield (USA)	–	C	–
Mike Tyson (USA)	1	5	9
Vitaly Klitschko (UKR)	2	6	–
Kirk Johnson (CAN)	3	–	8
Clifford Etienne (USA)	4	–	11
Larry Donald (USA)	5	4	7
David Tua (NZ)	6	7	5
Henry Akinwande (GB)	7	8	–
Vaughn Bean (USA)	8	12	–
Lance Whitaker (USA)	9	–	–
Michael Moorer (USA)	10	–	–
Vacant	–	1	1
Kirk Johnson (CAN)	–	2	–
John Ruiz (USA)	–	3	12
David Izon (NIG)	14	9	–
Oleg Maskaev (UKR)	24	10	10
Vacant	–	–	2
Danell Nicholson (USA)	15	–	3
Hasim Rahman (USA)	11	–	4
Wladimir Klitschko (UKR)	–	–	6

CRUISERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Juan Carlos Gomez (CUBA)	C	–	–
Virgil Hill (USA)	–	C	–
Vassiliy Jirov (KAZ)	–	–	C
Marcelo Dominguez (ARG)	1	5	6
Wayne Braithwaite (GUY)	2	–	10
Louis Azille (DR)	3	4	8
Torsten May (GER)	4	11	2
Dale Brown (CAN)	5	–	–
Ezra Sellars (USA)	6	–	7
Fabrice Tiozzo (FRA)	7	6	–
Arthur Williams (USA)	8	7	4
Vincenzo Cantatore (ITA)	9	–	–
James Toney (USA)	10	2	5
Vacant	–	1	–
Alexander Gurov (UKR)	13	3	–
Carl Thompson (GB)	12	8	3
Valery Vikhor (LAT)	–	9	–
Vincenzo Cantatore (ITA)	–	10	–
Alex Gonzales (USA)	–	–	1
Freemon Barr (BAH)	–	–	9

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Roy Jones (USA)	C	C	C
Michael Nunn (USA)	1	–	–
Clinton Woods (GB)	2	8	4
Thomas Ulrich (GER)	3	–	–
Yawe Davis (ITA)	4	–	–
Jean-Marc Mormerck (FRA)	5	–	–
Reggie Johnson (USA)	6	10	10
Eric Harding (USA)	7	–	3
Julio Gonzalez (USA)	8	9	–
Glenn Kelly (AUSTRL)	9	6	1
Derrick Harmon (USA)	10	4	8
Lou Del Valle (USA)	–	1	–
Jean-Mark Mormeck (FRA)	–	2	–
Frank Liles (USA)	–	3	–
David Telesco (USA)	–	5	12
Richard Hall (USA)	16	7	–
Vacant	–	–	2
Antonio Tarver (USA)	13	–	5
Lincoln Carter (USA)	11	12	6
Will Taylor (USA)	30	–	7
Billy Lewis (USA)	–	–	9

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Davey Hilton (CAN)	C	–	–
Bruno Girard (FRA)	–	C	–
Sven Ottke (GER)	–	–	C
Eric Lucas (CAN)	1	–	–
Dingaan Thobela (SA)	2	–	–
Glenn Catley (GB)	3	–	–
Markus Beyer (GER)	4	–	12
Mario Velt (GER)	5	5	8
Dana Rosenblatt (USA)	6	3	6
Stephane Ouellet (CAN)	7	–	–
Byron Mitchell (USA)	8	2	–
David Starie (GB)	9	7	–
Mads Larsen (DEN)	10	6	–
Manuel Siacca (PR)	–	1	–
Andrei Shkalikov (RUS)	12	4	5
Thomas Tate (USA)	16	8	3
Charles Brewer (USA)	14	9	4
Richie Woodhall (GB)	–	10	–
James Butler (USA)	20	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Syd Vanderpool (CAN)	–	–	7
Omar Sheika (USA)	13	–	9
Guillermo Jones (PAN)	–	11	10

MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Keith Holmes (USA)	C	–	–
William Joppy (USA)	–	C	–
Bernard Hopkins (USA)	–	–	C
Erland Betare (FRA)	1	–	–
David Reid (USA)	2	2	3
Howard Eastman (GB)	3	1	5
Robert McCracken (GB)	4	–	–
Ali Ennebati (FRA)	5	–	11
Kevin Palmer (USA)	6	–	–
Carl Daniels (USA)	7	5	1
Tito Mendoza (PAN)	8	–	8
Nick Martinez (USA)	9	–	–
Jerry Elliott (NIG)	10	–	–
Darren Obah (AUSTRL)	–	3	–
Julio Cesar Green (DR)	–	4	–
Rito Ruvalcaba (MEX)	–	6	–
Hassine Cherifi (FRA)	–	7	12
Lonnie Bradley (USA)	–	8	–
Antonio Perugino (ITA)	18	9	–
Ryan Rhodes (GB)	30	10	–
Vacant	–	–	2
Stephane Ouellet (CAN)	–	11	4
Antwun Echols (USA)	–	–	6
Brian Barbosa (USA)	13	–	7
Santos Cardona (PR)	–	–	9
Armand Krajnc (SLV)	–	–	10

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Francisco Castillejo (SPA)	C	–	–
Felix Trinidad (PR)	–	C	C
Roman Karmazin (RUS)	1	5	–
Fernando Vargas (USA)	2	2	3
Winky Wright (USA)	3	3	1
J.C. Candelo (COL)	4	–	9
Alfred Ankamah (GHA)	5	–	–
Quirino Garcia (MEX)	6	–	–
Fitz Vanderpool (CAN)	7	–	–
Nicolas Cervera (COL)	8	–	–
Tony Marshall (USA)	9	–	–
Akira Ohigashi (JAP)	10	10	–
Jose Flores (MEX)	12	1	5
Ike Quartey (GHA)	–	4	12
Julio Cesar Vazquez (ARG)	–	6	–
Mamadou Thiam (FRA)	13	7	–
Frank Olsen (DEN)	25	8	–
Kevin Kelly (USA)	16	9	–
Robert Frazier (USA)	–	–	2
Bronco McKart (USA)	19	–	4
Ross Thompson (USA)	–	–	6
Nader Hamdan (AUSTRL)	–	–	7
Alex Bunema (USA)	–	–	8
Emmett Linton (USA)	–	12	10

WELTERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Shane Mosley (USA)	C	–	–
Vacant	–	C	C
Oscar De La Hoya (USA)	1	–	–
Shannan Taylor (AUSTRL)	2	–	4
Jose Luis Cruz (MEX)	3	–	–
Kofi Jantuah (GHA)	4	10	10
Miguel Angel Gonzalez (MEX)	5	6	–
Carlos Baldomir (ARG)	6	11	–
Danny Perez (USA)	7	–	–
Oba Carr (USA)	8	9	3
Ike Quartey (GHA)	9	–	–
Thomas Damgaard (DEN)	10	5	–
Andrew Lewis (GUY)	23	1	7
James Page (USA)	–	2	–
Ricardo Mayorga (CR)	–	3	–
Arturo Gatti (USA)	–	4	11
Michael Trabant (GERE)	21	7	–
Chantel Stanciel (USA)	19	8	–
Raul Frank (USA)	–	–	1
Vernon Forrest (USA)	–	–	2
Frank Olsen (DEN)	–	–	5
Michele Piccirillo (ITA)	14	–	6
Larry Marks (USA)	–	–	8
Cory Spinks (USA)	12	–	9

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Kostya Tszyu (AUSTRL)	C	–	–
Sharmba Mitchell (USA)	9	C	–

Zab Judah (USA)	–	–	C
Oktay Urkal (TUR)	1	4	10
Hector Camacho Jr (PR)	2	1	7
Diobelis Hurtado (CUB)	3	2	–
Arturo Gatti (CAN)	4	–	–
Gianluca Branco (ITA)	5	–	–
Ray Oliveira (USA)	6	–	6
Ricky Quiles (USA)	7	–	–
Mikhail Krivolapov (RUS)	8	–	–
John-John Molina (PR)	10	6	–
Randall Bailey (USA)	20	3	8
Khalid Rahilou (FRA)	–	5	–
Ricky Hatton (GB)	15	7	12
Alex Trujillo (PR)	–	8	–
Hiroyuki Maeda (JAP)	30	9	–
Gabriel Mapuoka (FRA)	11	10	9
Vacant	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Allan Vester (DEN)	19	–	3
George Scott (SWE)	28	–	4
Terronn Millett (USA)	–	–	5

LIGHTWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Jose Luis Castillo (MEX)	C	–	–
Takanori Hatakeyama (JAP)	–	C	–
Paul Spadafora (USA)	–	–	C
Steve Johnston (USA)	1	–	3
Julien Lorcy (FRA)	2	1	6
Lawrence Ngobeni (SA)	3	–	–
Lovemore Ndou (SA)	4	–	–
Cesar Bazan (MEX)	5	–	–
Thembinkosi Ntyenene (SA)	6	–	–
Diego Corrales (USA)	7	–	4
Juan Lazcano (USA)	8	–	5
Sungho Yuh (KOR)	9	–	–
Alex Trujillo (PR)	10	–	–
Alberto Sicurella (ARG)	–	2	–
Rick Yoshimura (JAP)	–	3	–
Gilbert Serrano (VEN)	–	4	–
Stefano Zoff (ITA)	12	5	–
Jean-Baptiste Mendy (FRA)	19	6	–
Raul Balbi (ARG)	–	7	–
Edson Xuxa Nascimento (BRA)	25	8	–
Djamel Lifa (FRA)	20	9	–
Dennis Holbaek (DEN)	–	10	–
Vacant	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Billy Irwin (CAN)	–	–	7
Victoriano Damian Sosa (DR)	13	–	8
Joel Perez (USA)	–	–	9
Angel Manfredy (USA)	–	–	10

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Floyd Mayweather (USA)	C	–	–
Joel Casamayor (CUB)	–	C	–
Steve Forbes (USA)	–	–	C
Jesus Chavez (USA)	1	8	5
Sirimongkol Singmanassuk (THAI)	2	–	–
Kengo Nagashima (JAP)	3	–	–
Tiger Ari (PHIL)	4	–	–
Lakva Sim (MON)	5	2	–
Philip Ndou (SA)	6	–	–
Tontcho Tontchev (BUL)	7	3	8
Carlos Hernandez (EL SALV)	8	–	–
Affif Djelti (FRA)	9	–	–
Koji Arisawa (JAP)	10	10	–
Vacant	–	1	1
Yodsanan Nanthachai (THAI)	–	4	–
Jongkwon Baek (KOR)	–	5	–
Luis Navarro (USA)	15	6	6
Jorge Barrios (ARG)	–	7	–
Jose Miguel Cotto (PR)	–	9	–
John Brown (USA)	–	–	2
Raul Balbi (ARG)	–	–	3
Carlos Hernandez (USA)	–	–	4
David Santos (USA)	–	–	7
Juan Arias (USA)	–	–	9
Robert Garcia (USA)	–	12	10

FEATHERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Guty Espadas (MEX)	C	–	–
Derrick Gainer (USA)	–	C	–
Mbulelo Botile (SA)	–	–	C
Injin Chi (KOR)	1	–	–
Juan Manuel Marquez (MEX)	2	3	–
Johnny Tapia (USA)	3	–	–
Scott Harrison (GB)	4	–	–
Robbie Peden (AUSTRL)	5	–	–
Manuel Calvo (SPA)	6	–	–
Edgar Barcenas (MEX)	7	–	–
Juan Carlos Ramirez (MEX)	8	–	–
Hector Velazquez (MEX)	9	–	–
Tony Wehbee (AUS)	10	–	–
Victor Polo (COL)	–	1	2
Naseem Hamed (GB)	–	2	3
Philip Ndou (SA)	–	4	–
Angel Vasquez (PR)	–	5	4
Lewis Woods (US)	–	6	–
Fred Norwood (USA)	–	7	–
Pablo Chacon (ARG)	–	8	–
Kengo Nagashima (JAP)	–	9	–
Daniel Seda (PR)	24	10	–
Manuel Medina (MEX)	15	–	1
Robbie Peden (AUSTRL)	–	–	5
David Toledo (USA)	–	–	6
Oscar Larios (MEX)	–	–	7
Panther Yanagida (JAP)	20	–	8
Augie Sanchez (USA)	11	–	9
Frankie Toledo (USA)	–	–	10

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Willie Jorrin (USA)	C	–	–
Clarence Adams (USA)	–	C	–
Lehlo Ledwaba (SA)	–	–	C
Michael Brodie (GB)	1	–	10
Oscar Larios (MEX)	2	–	–
Manny Pacquaio (PHIL)	3	–	3
Enrique Sanchez (MEX)	4	5	4
Israel Vazquez (MEX)	5	–	6
Yongjin Cho (KOR)	6	–	–
Cesar Soto (MEX)	7	–	–
Marcos Licona (USA)	8	–	–
Agapito Sanchez (DR)	9	–	–
Hector Julia Avila (DR)	10	–	9
Yobert Ortega (VEN)	–	1	–
Antonio Cermeno (VEN)	–	2	–
Jose Rojas (VEN)	29	3	–
Bugiarso (INDO)	–	4	–
Danny Romero (USA)	–	6	–
Nestor Garza (MEX)	–	7	12
Vladislav Antonov (RUS)	11	8	2
Kozo Ishii (JAP)	–	9	–
Osamu Sato (JAP)	13	10	–
Vacant	–	–	1
F. Rakkiatgym (INDO)	–	–	5
Sergei Devakov (UKR)	21	–	7
Arnel Barotillo (AUSTRL)	24	–	8

BANTAMWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Veerapol Sahaprom (THAI)	C	–	–
Paul Ayala (USA)	–	C	–
Tim Austin (USA)	–	–	C
Ricardo Barajas (MEX)	1	11	–
Genaro Garcia (USA)	2	8	–
Adan Vargas (MEX)	3	4	5
Jess Maca (PHIL)	4	–	–
Cuauhtemoc Gomez (MEX)	5	–	11
Toshiaki Nishioka (JAP)	6	–	–
Hugo Dianzo (MEX)	7	10	–
Alejandro Estrada (MEX)	8	–	–
Johnny Bredahl (DEN)	9	6	–
Luigi Castiglione (ITA)	10	–	9
Eidy Moya (VEN)	–	1	–
Sahoiu Sithchai Condo (THAI)	–	2	–
Toshiaki Nishioka (JAP)	–	3	–
Rafael Marquez (MEX)	13	5	10
Johnny Tapia (USA)	–	7	–
Jorge Eliecer Julio (COL)	–	9	12
Jesus Perez (COL)	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Pete Frissina (USA)	–	–	3
Danny Romero (USA)	–	–	4
Arthur Johnson (USA)	–	–	6
Steve Dotse (GHA)	–	–	7
Dario Azuaga (PAR)	–	–	8

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Masanori Tokuyama (JAP)	C	–	–
Leo Gamez (VEN)	–	C	–
Felix Machado (VEN)	–	–	C
Gerry Penalosa (PHIL)	1	–	–
In Joo Cho (KOR)	2	–	–
Dimitri Kirilov (RUS)	3	–	–
Kazuhiro Ryuko (JAP)	4	–	–
Reynaldo Hurtado (COL)	5	–	–
Vernie Torres (USA)	6	–	7
Luis Bolanos (COL)	7	10	6
Pedro Alcazar (PAN)	8	–	–
Seungrok Choi (KOR)	9	–	–
Martin Castillo (MEX)	10	–	–
Saen Sow Ploenchit (THAI)	–	1	8
Jesus Rojas (VEN)	–	2	3
Mbwana Matumla (TNZ)	–	3	–
Alexander Munoz (VEN)	–	4	–
Sornpichai Pisnurachank (THAI)	–	5	–
Luigi Castiglione (ITA)	–	6	–
Hideki Todaka (JAP)	11	7	–
Yokthai Sithoar (THAI)	–	8	–
Setsuo Kobayashi (JAP)	–	9	–
Vacant	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Adonis Rivas (NIC)	–	–	4
Mauricio Pastrana (COL)	–	–	5
Julio Gamboa (NIC)	–	–	9
Diego Morales (MEX)	–	12	10

FLYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Malcolm Tunacao (PHIL)	C	–	–
Eric Morel (USA)	–	C	–
Irene Pacheco (COL)	–	–	C
Chatchai Sasakul (THAI)	1	–	–
Alex Ali Baba (GHA)	2	9	–
Mike Trejo (USA)	3	4	5
Alexander Mahmutov (RUS)	4	8	1
Gerson Guerrero (MEX)	5	–	–
Medgoen Singsurat (THAI)	6	–	–
Hayato Asai (JAP)	7	–	–
Hiroshi Nakano (JAP)	8	–	–
Alejandro Montiel (MEX)	9	7	4
Hussein Hussein (AUSTRL)	10	–	–
Jose Lopez (VEN)	–	1	–
Denkaosaen Kaowitch (THAI)	–	2	–
Isidro Garcia (MEX)	–	3	–
Mzukisi Sikali (SA)	28	5	–
Panieng Okuda (THAI)	–	6	–
Gilberto Gonzalez (VEN)	–	10	–
Vacant	–	–	2
Hawk Makepula (SA)	–	–	3
Martin Castillo (MEX)	–	11	6
Ferid Ben Jeddou (TUN)	–	–	7
David Guerault (FRA)	12	–	8
Shiro Yahiro (JAP)	–	–	9
Zoltan Lunka (TUR)	20	–	10

JR. FLYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Yosam Choi (KOR)	C	–	–
Bebis Mendoza (COL)	–	C	–
Ricardo Lopez (MEX)	–	–	C
Jorge Arce (MEX)	1	6	4
Hidenobu Honda (JAP)	2	2	–
Juanito Rubillar (PHIL)	3	–	–
Saman Sorjaturong (THAI)	4	–	–
Eric Ortiz (MEX)	5	12	–
Takayuki Korogi (JAP)	6	–	–
Kohki Tanaka (JAP)	7	9	–
Pongsaklek Wonjongkam (THAI)	8	–	–
Jesus Martinez (MEX)	9	–	–
Melchor Cob Castro (MEX)	10	8	–
Pichitnoi C. Siriwat (THAI)	–	1	–
Yura Dimas (MON)	17	3	–
Rosendo Alvarez (NIC)	–	4	10
Pongsaklek Nakornton (THAI)	–	5	–
Nelson Dieppa (DR)	–	7	–
Andy Tabanas (PHIL)	–	10	–
Vacant	–	–	1
Zolani Petelo (SA)	–	–	2
Pongsaklek Sithkanongsak (THAI)	–	–	3
Alejandro Montiel (MEX)	–	–	5
Ratanapol Sor Vorapin (THAI)	–	–	6
Alex Sanchez (PR)	–	–	7
Oscar Andrade (MEX)	–	–	8
Everardo Morales (MEX)	–	–	9

STRAWWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Jose Antonio Aguirre (MEX)	C	–	–
Keitaro Hoshino (JAP)	–	C	–
Vacant	–	–	C
Wandee Chor Chareon (THAI)	1	–	5
Yasuo Tokimitsu (JAP)	2	–	6
Juan Keb Baas (MEX)	3	–	–
Jaewon Kim (KOR)	4	–	–
Erdene Chuluun (MON)	5	–	–
Hiroshi Nakajima (JAP)	6	–	–
Yutaka Niida (JAP)	7	–	–
Khulile Makeba (SA)	8	12	–
Joma Gamboa (PHIL)	9	5	–
Zarlit Rodrigo (PHIL)	10	–	–
Chana Porpaoin (THAI)	–	1	–
Daniel Reyes (COL)	–	2	1
Noel Arambulet (VEN)	–	3	12
Jose Garcia (COL)	–	4	–
Hiroshi Matsumoto (JAP)	12	6	–
Songkram Porpaoin (THAI)	–	7	–
Hiroshi Nakajima (JAP)	–	8	7
Udomdet Porpaoin (THAI)	–	9	–
Fasan Pongsawan (THAI)	–	10	–
Vacant	–	–	2
Kermin Guardia (COL)	–	–	3
Rocky Palma (JAP)	–	–	4
Surachai Saengmorokot (THAI)	–	–	8
Andy Tabanas (PHIL)	–	–	9
Myungsup Park (KOR)	–	–	1

CLASSIC

From THE RING, September 1982

What Is Bigger Than A Breadbox & Smaller Than A Battleship?

THE CRUISERWEIGHTS

By Ed Schuyler

In July 1981, Leon Spinks announced he was leaving the heavyweight division to campaign as a cruiserweight—that little division nestled not so snugly between the light heavyweights and heavyweights. The conqueror of Muhammad Ali, who only a month before had failed in a heavyweight title bid against Larry Holmes, said: "I'm trying to get a title back ..."

Spinks also said he was tired of spotting weight to opponents, like the 12 pounds he gave away to Holmes. It must be noted that Holmes spotted 12 pounds to Gerry Cooney in their title bout. Spotting weight has long been a source of argument among observers of the heavyweights, some contending it's an excuse for fighters short on ability.

Back in 1902, there were only four weight divisions in American boxing: bantam, feather, middle, and heavy, with the

Marvin Camel and Mate Parlov needed two tries to finally determine who was the top man in the newly created cruiserweight class. This bout merited little attention on the Larry Holmes-Leroy Jones undercard.

middleweight limit at 158 pounds. Lou Houseman, the manager of a smallish heavyweight named Jack Root, founded the light heavyweight division in 1903 so his fighter could hold a title. In 1914, England followed suit, but their 175-pound class was called cruiserweight.

Since its inception, the light heavyweight division has been ruled by some great fighters, but they have toiled often in the shadow of the quicker middleweights and the more powerful heavyweights. The third light heavyweight champion, Bob Fitzsimmons, gained the crown after he had lost the heavyweight title to Jim Jeffries.

Several light heavyweight champions have attempted to win the heavyweight title and failed—Root, Philadelphia Jack O'Brien, Georges Carpentier, Tommy Loughran, Billy Conn, Gus Lesnevich, Archie Moore, and Bob Foster. The general belief is they failed because they just weren't natural heavyweights, although Lesnevich at 182 outweighed Ezzard Charles, and Moore at 188 was only one-quarter pound lighter than Rocky Marciano for their bout.

Now it has been decided that some heavyweights aren't natural light heavies or heavyweights. This decision was made by the WBC and WBA. And it's just fine with the TV networks who buy any title bout thrown their way.

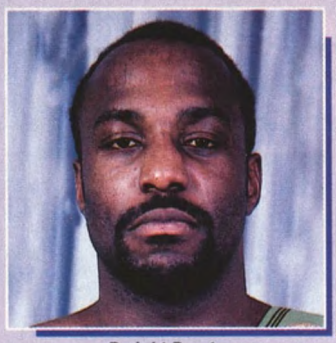
Former WBA heavyweight champ Leon Spinks, battering Kevin Isaac in a 1980 bout, thought he would adopt the orphan cruiserweight class. Spinks felt the cruiserweight division was his fastest route to becoming a world champion again, but he never did win a title at 190 pounds.

Cruiserweight might have been a nice step for former light heavyweight champs like Billy Conn, who attempted to make the jump to heavyweight and were forced to face dangerous sluggers like Joe Louis.

In 1979, the WBC, led by Jose Sulaiman of Mexico, formed the cruiserweight division, with a weight limit of 190 pounds. The WBC chose not two small heavyweights, but two blown-up light heavyweights—Mate Parlov of Yugoslavia, former WBC light heavyweight champion, and Marvin Camel, a part Flathead Indian from Montana—to scrap for the first cruiserweight title.

The fight, held in Yugoslavia and shown on U.S. television, left the WBC cruiserweight-less in its list of champions—the bout was a draw. The WBC brought Parlov and Camel together again March 31, 1980, at Las Vegas, the night Larry Holmes kept the WBC heavyweight title against Leroy Jones. On the same night, Sugar Ray Leonard retained the WBC welterweight championship against Dave "Boy" Green at Landover, Maryland, Eddie Mustafa Muhammad won the WBA light heavyweight title from Marvin

THE RING RATINGS, September 1982



Dwight Braxton

HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Larry Holmes, Easton, PA
1. **Mike Weaver**, Los Angeles, CA
2. **Michael Dokes**, Akron, OH
3. **Trevor Berbick**, Canada
4. **Greg Page**, Louisville, KY
5. **Gerrie Coetzee**, South Africa
6. **Gerry Cooney**, Huntington, NY
7. **James (Quick) Tillis**, Chicago, IL
8. **Randall (Tex) Cobb**, Philadelphia, PA
9. **Tim Witherspoon**, Philadelphia, PA
10. **Renaldo Snipes**, Yonkers, NY

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Dwight Braxton, Camden, NJ
1. **Michael Spinks**, St. Louis, MO
2. **Matthew Saad Muhammad**, Philadelphia, PA
3. **Eddie Mustafa Muhammad**, Brooklyn, NY
4. **Carlos DeLeon**, Puerto Rico
5. **Eddie Davis**, Freeport, NY
6. **Jerry Celestine**, New Orleans, LA
7. **John Davis**, Hempstead, NY
8. **James Scott**, Rahway, NJ
9. **S.T. Gordon**, Las Vegas, NV
10. **Marvin Johnson**, Indianapolis, IN

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
World Champ: Marvin Hagler, Brockton, MA
1. **Tony Sibson**, England
2. **Frank Fletcher**, Philadelphia, PA
3. **Mustafa Hamsho**, Syria
4. **Dwight Davison**, Detroit, MI
5. **Fulgencio Obelmejias**, Venezuela
6. **Thomas Hearns**, Detroit, MI
7. **Ray Seales**, Tacoma, WA
8. **James Green**, Irvington, NJ
9. **Bernard Mays**, Detroit, MI
10. **Alex Ramos**, Bronx, NY

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS
World Champ: Vacant
1. **Wilfred Benitez**, Puerto Rico
2. **Tony Ayala Jr.**, San Antonio, TX
3. **Davey Moore**, New York, NY
4. **Carlos Herrera**, Argentina
5. **Ayub Kalule**, Uganda
6. **Charlie Weir**, South Africa
7. **Gary Guiden**, Muncie, IN
8. **Roberto Duran**, Panama
9. **Clint Jackson**, Nashville, TN
10. **Mike McCallum**, New York, NY

WELTERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Ray Leonard, Palmer Park, MD
1. **Milton McCrory**, Detroit, MI
2. **Donald Curry**, Fort Worth, TX
3. **Roger Stafford**, Philadelphia, PA
4. **Pipino Cuevas**, Mexico
5. **Marlon Starling**, Hartford, CT
6. **Kevin Howard**, Philadelphia, PA
7. **Colin Jones**, England
8. **Bobby Joe Young**, Steubenville, OH
9. **Mauricio Bravo**, Venezuela
10. **Randy Shields**, Hollywood, CA

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Aaron Pryor, Cincinnati, OH
1. **Leroy Haley**, Las Vegas, NV
2. **Saoul Mamby**, New York, NY
3. **Johnny Bumphus**, Nashville, TN
4. **Dujuan Johnson**, Detroit, MI
5. **Jo Kimpuani**, France
6. **Steve Hearon**, Houston, TX
7. **Ronnie Shields**, Port Arthur, TX
8. **Miguel Montilla**, Dominican Republic
9. **Billy Costello**, Kingston, NY
10. **Willie Rodriguez**, Allentown, PA

LIGHTWEIGHTS
World Champ: Alexis Arguello, Nicaragua
1. **Aaron Pryor**, Cincinnati, OH
2. **Ray Mancini**, Youngstown, OH
3. **Edwin Rosario**, Puerto Rico
4. **Andy Ganigan**, Honolulu, HI
5. **Howard Davis Jr.**, Glen Cove, NY
6. **Ruben Munoz**, Dallas, TX
7. **Gonzallo Montellano**, Bakersfield, CA
8. **Hilmer Kenty**, Detroit, MI
9. **Rodolfo (Gato) Gonzalez**, Mexico
10. **Art Frias**, Los Angeles, CA

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS
World Champ: Samuel Serrano, Puerto Rico
1. **Cornelius Boza-Edwards**, England
2. **Edwin Rosario**, Puerto Rico
3. **Rafael (Bazooka) Limon**, Mexico
4. **Rolando Navarrete**, Honolulu, HI
5. **Bobby Chacon**, Pacoima, CA
6. **Yasutsune Uehara**, Japan
7. **Hector Camacho**, New York, NY
8. **Chung Il-Choi**, Korea
9. **John Verderosa**, Staten Island, NY
10. **Ildelfonso Bethelmy**, Venezuela

FEATHERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Salvador Sanchez, Mexico
1. **Eusebio Pedroza**, Panama
2. **Wilfredo Gomez**, Puerto Rico
3. **Juan LaPorte**, New York, NY
4. **Rocky Lockridge**, Paterson, NJ
5. **Mario Miranda**, Colombia
6. **Ruben Castillo**, Bakersfield, CA
7. **Pat Cowdell**, England
8. **Jose Caba**, Dominican Republic
9. **Paul Ferrari**, Australia
10. **Azumah Nelson**, Ghana

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHT
World Champ: Wilfredo Gomez, Puerto Rico
1. **Leo Cruz**, Dominican Republic
2. **Jamie Garza**, Los Angeles, CA
3. **Mike Ayala**, New York, NY
4. **Sergio Palma**, Argentina
5. **Ricardo Cardona**, Colombia
6. **Lupe Pintor**, Mexico
7. **Roberto Rubaldino**, Mexico
8. **Juan (Kid) Meza**, Los Angeles, CA
9. **Soon-Hyun Chung**, Korea
10. **Felipe Orozco**, Colombia

BANTAMWEIGHTS
World Champ: Jeff Chandler, Philadelphia, PA
1. **Lupe Pintor**, Mexico
2. **Chul-Ho Kim**, Korea
3. **Kiko Bejines**, Mexico
4. **Albert Davila**, Los Angeles, CA
5. **Oscar Muniz**, Los Angeles, CA
6. **Eijiro Murata**, Japan
7. **Johnny Carter**, Philadelphia, PA
8. **Jiro Watanabe**, Japan
9. **Freddie Jackson**, Houston, TX
10. **Rafael Orono**, Venezuela

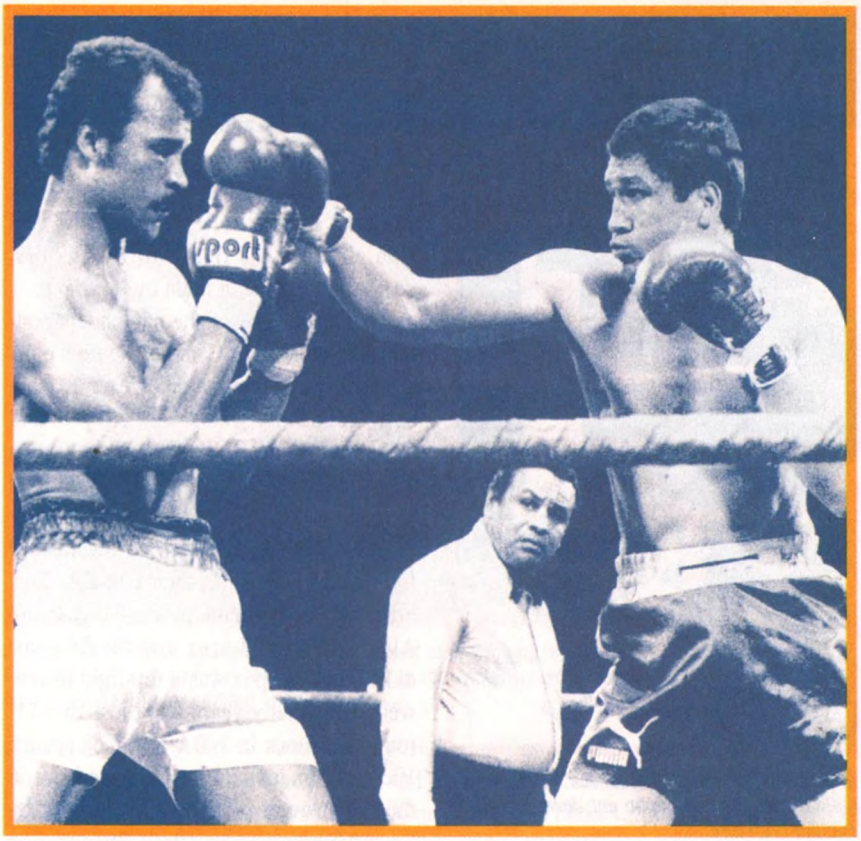
FLYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Prudencio Cardona, Colombia
1. **Santos Laciar**, Argentina
2. **Hilario Zapata**, Panama
3. **Tadashi Tomori**, Japan
4. **Katsuo Tokashiki**, Japan
5. **Antonio Avelar**, Mexico
6. **Juan Herrera**, Mexico
7. **Amado Ursua**, Mexico
8. **Hwan Jin Kim**, Korea
9. **Rafael Pedroza**, Panama
10. **Candido Tellez**, Mexico

Johnson, and Mike Weaver took the WBC heavyweight crown from John Tate at Knoxville, Tennessee.

All the fights were on national television except Camel-Parlov. Camel won a decision in a fight that preceded the Holmes-Jones bout, but most members of the media at the Caesars Palace Sports Pavilion missed it. They were in the press-room watching the Weaver-Tate fight on television.

Even a bigger secret was Camel's title loss November 25, 1980, at the Louisiana Superdome, following Roberto Duran's quitting in the eighth round against Leonard. Most of the people had left by the time Camel was outpointed by Carlos "Sugar" DeLeon. Not one member of the Louisiana State Athletic Commission could be seen at ringside.

Meanwhile, it dawned on the powers-that-be at the WBA that they couldn't split a division they didn't recognize. So, they, too, formed a cruiserweight class, but, of



Parlov first reached acclaim by winning the WBC light heavyweight title and retaining the belt over Great Britain's John Conteh in 1978. Two fights later, Parlov lost the title to Marvin Johnson.

course, called theirs the junior heavyweight division.

The WBC countered this by raising the cruiserweight limit to 195 pounds, making it all but impossible to unify the title. Confused? So were the fighters in the division. Apparently, the WBC failed to notify DeLeon or S.T. Gordon of the increased limit in their gerrymandered division, since DeLeon came in eight pounds under the limit and Gordon six pounds under, when Gordon won the title on a second-round knockout last June 27.

The WBA, on a mission of mercy, saved Ossie Ocasio from further heavyweight harm by choosing him to fight for its junior heavyweight championship. Ocasio was the Puerto Rican Rocky, except instead of punching sides of beef in a slaughterhouse, he was discovered by Bill Daly beating up dirty shirts in a laundry. Ocasio had challenged Holmes in '79 and played yo-yo until Holmes cut the string in the seventh round. In '80, Ocasio was knocked out in the first round by Michael Dokes. Then last year he proved there was definitely a place in the cruiserweight/junior heavyweight class for him when he was knocked out by John L. Gardner.

As an opponent for Ocasio, the WBA picked a piece of freight off the Bob Arum South Africa pipeline—Robbie Williams. It was a shame because Williams obviously was improving as a mediocre heavyweight. In 1978 and '79, he was twice knocked out by a blimp named Jimmy Abbott, then in 1980 and '81, he scored two eight-round decisions over Abbott. Ocasio won a split decision over Williams before a crowd of 25,000 in Johannesburg, showing how badly South Africans want a championship—any championship.

So we have a division, with two different weight limits, one champion who got clobbered in a bid for the heavyweight title, and another, Gordon, who was disqualified for not fighting Gerry Cooney in 1978.

The general feeling about the division is summed up by Pablo Ramos, when asked recently what a cruiserweight was. He answered, somewhat puzzled by the question and the classification, "You tell me."

Nevertheless, boxing's two top promoters, Arum and Don King, show an interest in the bastard division. Both have

When Camel, a part Flathead Indian from Montana, won his decision over Parlov, most of the media members at Caesars Palace Sports Pavilion were missing, busy in the pressroom watching the WBA heavyweight title fight between Mike Weaver and John Tate.

Tough Puerto Rican Ossie Ocasio would not have to pick himself up off the canvas so often as a cruiserweight, as he did in his heavyweight bid against Larry Holmes, who cut down Ocasio in seven rounds. As a cruiser, Ocasio was the first to hold the WBA title.

staged cruiserweight (from here on the division will be referred to as "cruiserweight") title fights, and both have solid contacts with the three major TV networks, who seem to like their weekend afternoon telecasts to feature title fights. Also, King launched a sports-entertainment network, and Arum has ties to cable-television.

There is one problem, which Arum acknowledges, that could keep the division from achieving serious status. Cruiserweight champions or young fighters who demonstrate ability and flair will be lured to the heavyweight division and its much bigger purses—weight differences be damned.

Gordon had been champion for only a few minutes when he was telling people, "I want Larry Holmes or Mike Weaver. I want their big bucks. That's my dream."

When Spinks announced he was leaving the heavyweight division, he also let it be known he would be available for the right heavyweight match.

If Spinks, who beat Ivy Brown in his only cruiserweight fight, continues to campaign in the division and wins a title, it would be a big boost for a class looking for character.

"It's the personality that counts," said Mort Sharnik, who's in charge of boxing for CBS, which televised Gordon's title victory over DeLeon. "The division is looking for personalities."

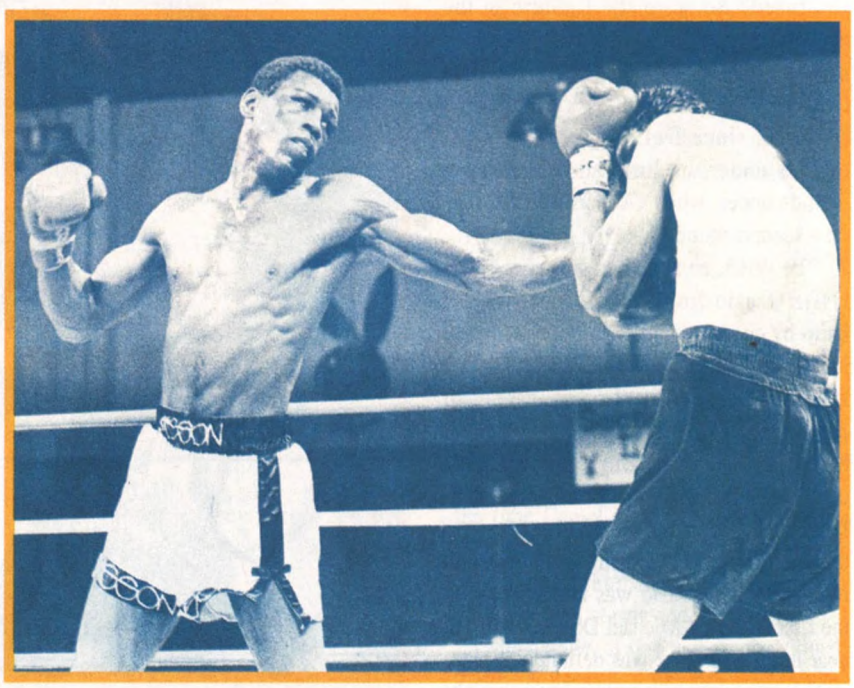
Spinks is the only attention-getter in the division, in and out of the ring, although Leon would prefer less attention on the outside. S.T. Gordon, though, is a true powerpuncher and could develop a following.

After Spinks and Gordon, the division offers Young Joe Louis, 22-1, since '75, with his best-known victim being Jesse Burnett, and Willie Edwards, who had won all 10 of his fights in '81, his first year as a pro, nine of them by knockout.

Of course, one of the contenders continues to be Marvin Camel, who now must appear in public without the championship belt around his waist. The 31-year-old Camel is a workmanlike pro who split two 10-round decisions with Matthew Saad Muhammad in '76.

In this division, most of the ranked fighters are at least in their late-20s. Two other senior contenders are 31-year-old Alvaro "Yaqui" Lopez and the 36-year-old Burnett. Lopez was a top light heavyweight for many years, who lost two 15-round decisions in WBA title bids against Victor Galindez and was knocked out in the 14th round of a WBC title bout by Saad Muhammad in 1980. Burnett was knocked out in the ninth round by Miguel Cuello in a fight for the vacant WBC light heavyweight title in '77. In 16 fights from 1978 through '81, he lost nine times.

Two other former light heavyweights are ranking cruiserweights. One is the puzzled Pablo Ramos, who wasn't quite



Cruiserweight provided another opportunity for 31-year-old Alvaro "Yaqui" Lopez, who lost this classic duel to Matthew Saad Muhammad for the WBC light heavy title in 1980 and two 15-round decisions to WBA light heavyweight champ Victor Galindez.

Johnny Odhiambo of Uganda had his arm raised after winning a bout in February '82, and later had his ranking rise in the cruiserweight class despite doing little or nothing to earn it.

top class, losing a decision to Murray Sutherland and being knocked out by Jerry Celestine in 1980 and dropping a decision to Eddie Davis in '81. The other is Dale Grant, who was ranked number-eight by the WBA in June. According to the *1982 RING Record Book,* there was no activity recorded for Grant in '81. It also showed that beginning with a fifth-round knockout by Saad Muhammad in '78, Grant lost four of six fights. Should Grant become active, he probably will move up in the rankings—way up if he wins!

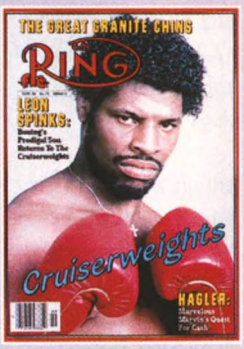
Three former heavyweights who dropped to the cruiserweight rankings are Randy Stephens, Willie "The Cannon" Shannon, and Alfonzo Ratliff. The 29-year-old Stephens was knocked out in the first round by Bernardo Mercado in 1977, in five by Ken Norton in '78, and in three by Kallie Knoetzee in '79. The 6'4" Shannon suffered his first pro loss after 18 wins when he was knocked out in the third round by Camel last year. The 26-year-old Ratliff, who stands 6'5", also suffered his first pro loss in '81, when he was knocked out by Tim Witherspoon in the seventh round of his 14th fight.

For contenders, these guys aren't exactly balls of fire.

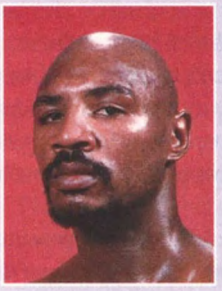
Even Sylvan Watbled of France, who was knocked out in six rounds by heavyweights Bunny Johnson and Lucien Rodriguez in 1978 and '80, respectively, is ranked. From Africa, besides Williams, stand—or sit, as the case may be—Nigerian Bashiru Ali, who lives in Los Angeles, and John Odhiambo of Uganda. As a light heavyweight in 1978-'79, his first two years as a pro, the 26-year-old Ali lost six of 11 fights. What did Odhiambo do to rate his ranking? Well, you have to rate a guy who fought Trevor Cattouse, even if he got knocked out in the second round.

There it is, the motley cruiserweight crew, a division that would probably fold if television cuts back on boxing, but there are no indications of that happening. When you think of it, the cruiserweight division sure beats forming a junior-fleaweight class for 90-pounders. ■

THE RING, September 1982



The Cover: In 1982, Leon Spinks was no longer viewed as the tireless, aggressive fighter he had been in 1978 when he shocked the world and defeated Muhammad Ali for the heavyweight title. THE RING chronicled the demise of "Neon Leon," and how he resurfaced as a struggling cruiserweight.



Marvin Starvin' For The Money: Marvin Hagler was the undisputed middleweight champ, yet received no major financial opportunities because of the lackluster talent that filled the middleweight class at the time. Hagler had to choose from a middleweight division that included Tony Sibson and Frank Fletcher.

Chin Music: THE RING evaluated the all-time great chins in boxing. Jake LaMotta topped the list, and Muhammad Ali (pictured) was rated fourth, having survived three wars with granite-fisted Joe Frazier. Ken Norton broke Ali's jaw in San Diego, California, in 1973, with "The Greatest" able to bounce back and win the rematch.

The Clown Prince Of Boxing: Max Baer held the heavyweight title briefly in the mid-1930s. Baer's tendency to clown in the ring included hitching up his trunks, laughing in the face of his opponent, and occasionally leaning over the ropes to talk to fans during a fight. The antics eventually led to his downfall, when he lost the title to James Braddock.

Fighter Of The Month: Milton McCrory fought through a painfully swollen right hand to defeat Roger Stafford. Dancing and moving, McCrory boxed his way to a decision victory that enabled him to improve to 19-0. "The Iceman" was considered the next welterweight champion, if Sugar Ray Leonard retired.

THE A, B, C & DEAS OF BOXING

THE LEFT HOOK

By Tommy Deas

You've watched the world's best fighters and read about them in this magazine, and now you want to give boxing a try, or at least learn a little more about the mechanics of the sport. Welcome to THE RING'S bi-monthly instructional feature on boxing's basics. Bear in mind, the techniques described here are just one of many approaches to the Sweet Science. The most important thing is to find a good coach and follow his instructions. All instructions on these pages are geared for an orthodox, or right-handed, stance. If you are left-handed, merely turn everything around.

The left hook can be one of the most potent tools in a boxer's arsenal, and one of the most difficult to master. Unlike the left jab and right cross, both of which are delivered on a straight path from the shoulder to the target, the left hook is an arcing punch that is delivered in a more looping fashion. Properly thrown, it can land even if the opponent has his hands held high in a defensive position, and can be an equally effective weapon whether thrown to the head or to the body.

The left hook is a powerpunch thrown with the forward hand, and can be used as either a lead punch or a counter. Thrown to the head, it can land with concussive force to the temple area, the jaw, or even on the chin. As a bodypunch, it can tenderize ribs or cause debilitating pain if it lands to the liver area.

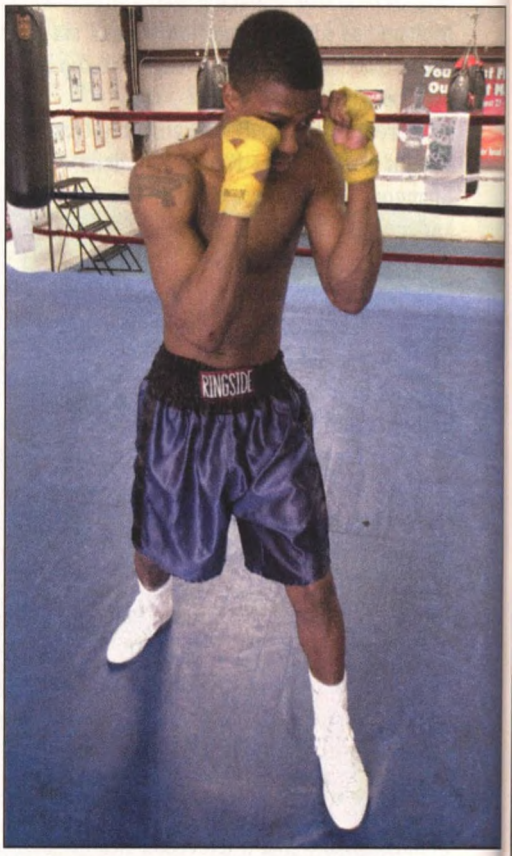
One advantage of the hook is that it can, when thrown in a short, tight arc, land without the opponent really seeing it coming. The punch you don't see is always the one that does the most damage. It can also be used to set up a right hand or to follow one in combination.

To throw the left hook, start with the basic stance, then shift the balance of your weight onto the left foot. You should bend your left knee slightly and lean your left hip over so that your weight is now distributed more to the left side of the body.

To throw the punch, you should rotate your hips in a snapping, clockwise motion, thrusting your left hip around to the right and pivoting on your left foot. You should always balance on the balls of your feet, so that when you begin the rotation your left foot easily turns and the heel spins in the same direction with the hip. If your left foot is flat on the ground, your heel can catch and cause stress on the knee area, which can lead to tendon damage or dislocation.

At the same time the lower body is rotating, the upper body does the same thing. The left shoulder should rotate to the right, leaning in toward the target just a bit. The right shoulder will move behind the right ear as your body rotates.

The position of the left elbow is a major key to throwing a proper left hook. For the most effective hook, the left elbow should not venture too high or far away from the body. If it stays close to your ribs, it will result in a quicker, more power-



Amateur welterweight Arhmad Vaughan displays the proper technique for throwing the left hook. Notice the way the whole left side of his body turns with the punch, and how he keeps his elbow in tight from start to finish.

ful punch. The left elbow should move to the right across your ribs as the body rotates.

The crook of the arm at the elbow allows you to control the range of the punch. Ideally, the body should be positioned in relation to the opponent so the hook lands with the arm crooked at about a 90-degree angle, so the forearm is at a right angle to the upper arm. If the target is farther away, you can open up the crook of the arm to a greater angle, moving the fist farther away from your shoulder. If the opponent is at a closer range, shorten the crook of the arm by bringing the fist in closer to the shoulder.

As the punch nears its target, the wrist should curl inward just a bit to bring the knuckles in line with what you are trying to hit. You don't want to hit with the inside of the glove, which results in more of a slap. For one thing, hitting with the inside of the glove is a foul. Equally important, it makes for a less effective punch. The thumb should stay on top of the punch, toward the ceiling.

To achieve the greatest possible force, continue to bring the left shoulder through the target after the fist has impacted. You will reach a point where either the shoulder or the target must give, and the shoulder joint of any sturdy boxer should be stronger than the chin or ribs of his opponent. When that point is reached, the greatest damage will be done.

When practicing, concentrate on the arc of the punch, working the rotation of the knee, hips, shoulders, and arm into synchronization.

Once the punch lands (or misses), bring it into position back along the same path on which it was thrown. Don't bring the fist back in a straight line from the target. Bringing a hook back the way it came makes it easier to follow up with a right hand and ensures that you get a proper follow-through on the punch. As with any punch, the hook must snap back into place quickly for defensive purposes. Try to make sure you bring the punch back into place as quickly as you got it out there.

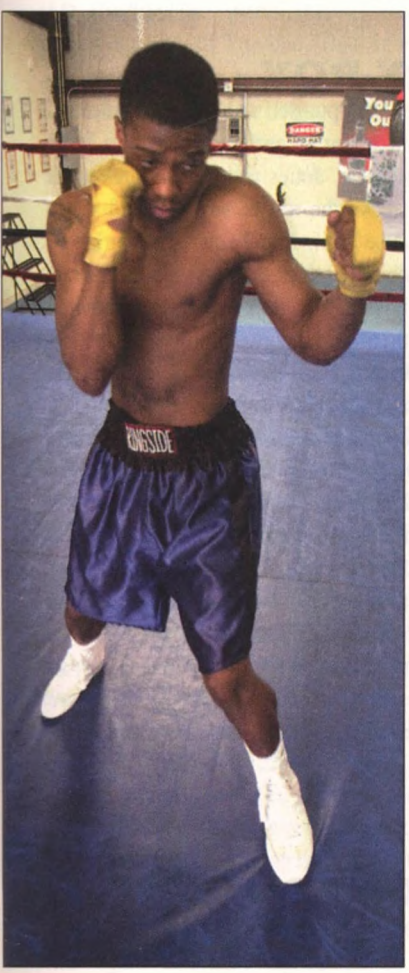
The most common mistake made by beginners in throwing the left hook is cranking it back too far before throwing it, thus letting your opponent know it is coming. Never let your hand go behind your left ear as you begin the punch. If you find it going backward before going forward, you are making a mistake that will leave you open to right hands that will be able to land before your hook ever gets off the launching pad.

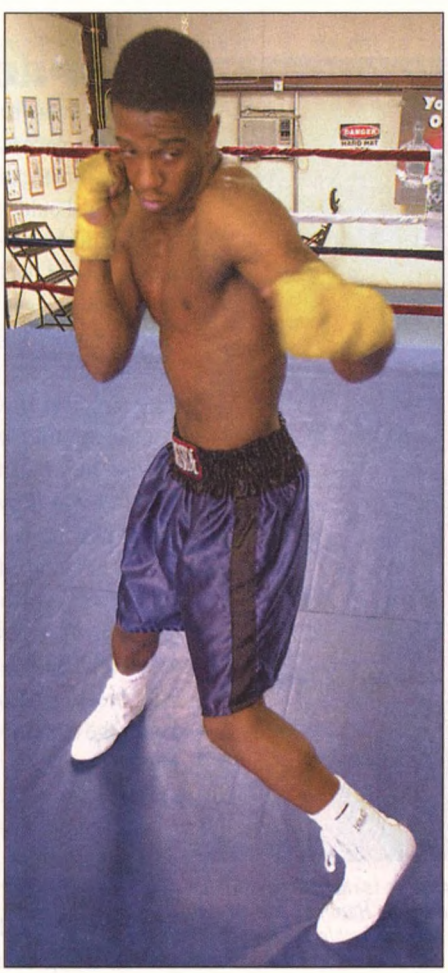
Another common mistake is bringing the elbow up high on a plane even with the shoulder. You can still throw a hook this way and land it, but the result is more of an arm punch that doesn't carry the power of your body weight behind it. It also results in a wider punch that is easier to see coming and easier to avoid.

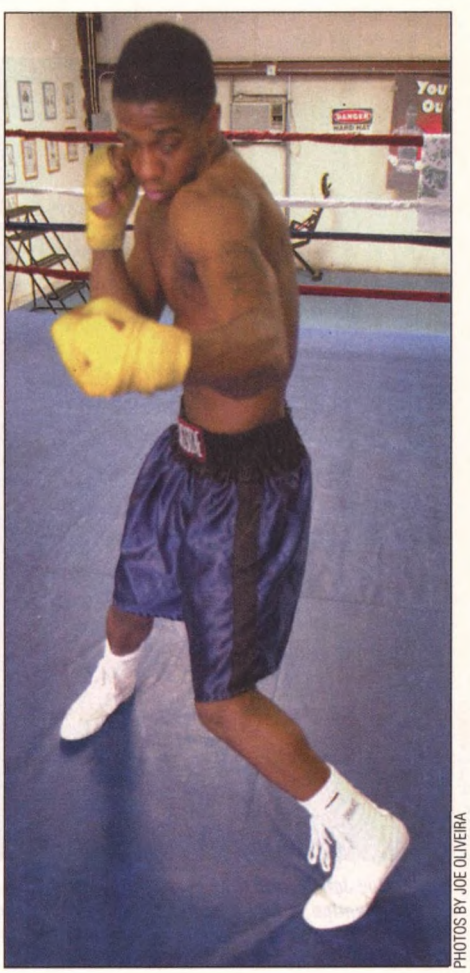
Perhaps more than any other punch, the left hook takes patience and a lot of hard work to perfect. Keep working at it on the bag and in front of the mirror and you will see improvement.

Up next: Footwork. ■

Tommy Deas is a sportswriter for the Tuscaloosa [Alabama] News and a trainer of professional and amateur boxers.







PHOTOS BY JOE OLIVEIRA

COME OUT WRITING

We welcome your letters, which may be edited for reasons of space and clarity. Send your comments to Come Out Writing, The Ring, P.O. Box 1148, Ft. Washington, PA 19034

FORGET THE LOW BLOWS

Boxing has enough black eyes without RING writer Eric Raskin condoning foul acts in the ring like low blows. In the article "Felix Trinidad Prepares To Conquer Another Division" in the April 2001 issue, Raskin wrote of Trinidad's low blow in the fourth round agaist Fernando Vargas: "in a brilliant veteran move, the Puerto Rican landed another left below the belt as Vargas was trying to finish him." I think young fighters need good examples to follow, not get their heads filled with thoughts of low blows as being a "brilliant veteran move." When I read that, it made me wonder how something negative like that can get into your fine publication.

Besides, the only thing I got out of the Trinidad-Vargas fight is just how dirty a fighter Trinidad really is. Vargas has always fought clean, and Vargas hit low only after he was hit low. It came to a point where even ESPN commentators were glorifying the low blows. And we wonder why boxing is always getting condemned.

CHARLES RUIZ
Santa Paula, CA

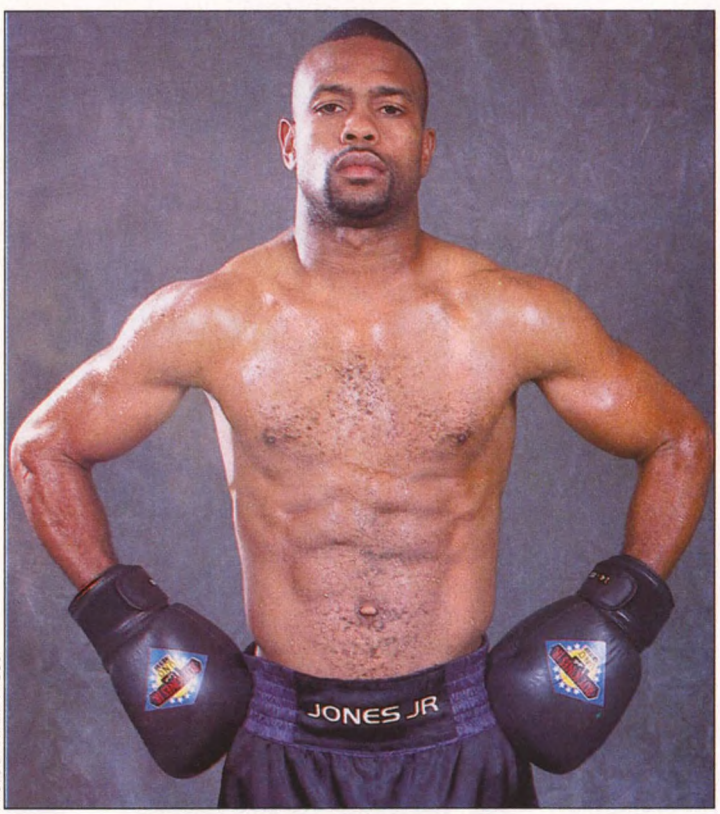


PHOTO BY FRANK VITUCCI

Why is Roy Jones constantly criticized by the media, wonders reader Michael Hills. Hills' contention is that opponents like Reggie Johnson, Eric Harding, and David Telesco are comparable to the challengers from the eras of Archie Moore, Joey Maxim, Bob Foster, and Michael Spinks.

RESPECT ROY

I need some help. I am puzzled as to why an outstanding boxer such as Roy Jones gathers obscenely large amounts of negative press. Jones truly is the proverbial head-and-shoulders above the rest of the field and seems to be punished because of it. Many related remarks are aimed toward the lack of depth of talent within the current light heavyweight division. Yet, let's face it, at no point in boxing history has the light heavyweight division been a hotbed of talent, and as such, opponents like Reggie Johnson, Eric Harding, David Telesco, etc., are certainly comparable to the contenders during the eras of Archie Moore, Joey Maxim, Bob Foster, and Michael Spinks.

Moreover, Roy is a natural middleweight who admitted to moving up in weight in search of new challengers and is currently talking about moving back down to super middleweight, where our very own Joe Calzaghe could play a part in this superb athlete's twilight years.

Rarely do boxers of Roy's abilities come along, so let's break tradition and marvel at this athlete before we begin the normal retrospective approach of his excellent career.

MICHAEL HILLS
Cumbria, England

HERE COMES TITO!

Felix Trinidad has done it! By giving a tough, talented, young, and proven champion like Fernando Vargas the

beating of his life, Felix has proven unequivocally that he *is* the undisputed best pound-for-pound fighter in the world today. I respect Fernando's heart, courage, and talent, but he was definitely in way over his head.

Now, watch out Shane Mosley and Roy Jones. "Tito" is not done yet, not by any stretch of the imagination. Mosley is scared of Tito. In fact, he's quoted as saying that Tito is just "too big" for him. You bet he is—too big and too tough of a puncher for Sugar Shane's taste. If Mosley had his tough times against De La Hoya, he would have nightmares fighting Tito.

After Trinidad wins the WBA middleweight title from William Joppy, it will be your turn, Roy. Trinidad might not knock out Roy Jones, but Roy has never fought anyone with the toughness, punching power, and skill of Trinidad. That fight might go either way, but it will surely not be as easy a fight for Roy as David Telesco, Richard Hall, and other tomato cans on which Jones has built his pound-for-pound ranking. If a solid but certainly not super-talented fighter like Lou Del Valle put Roy on his trunks, Tito could very well do the same.

VALERIANO RAMOS
Hamden, CT

Evander Holyfield, pictured slugging it out in his first fight with John Ruiz, is the greatest heavyweight in the history of boxing, writes Nigel Rossi of the only four-time heavyweight titlist.

HOLYFIELD THE GREAT

This is a response to the biased article entitled "Dear Evander, Get Out!" written by Ted Bodenrader in the January 2001 issue. It is not Evander who needs to watch himself, but rather it is his critics who need to watch themselves. You seem to forget the way Evander Holyfield has risen to the occasion numerous times in the past. Just when people think Evander can't or won't do something, he proves them wrong. Do not forget that Evander was told that he would never make it as a pro fighter, let alone a heavyweight champ. Do not forget that Evander was told he would never fight again because of his heart. People love to criticize and tell others what they can and cannot do. Holyfield thrives on this.

Watch out, world! The media will eat its words when the first four-time heavyweight world champion becomes the undisputed heavyweight champion again and shuts the mouths of his critics once and for all.

PATRICK ZITZ
North Shore, HI

As one of your readers, may I say that Evander Holyfield is, after all, the greatest heavyweight of his generation—superior to Mike Tyson, Lennox Lewis, Riddick Bowe, and the rest! Not only that, but I passionately believe that Holyfield is, in fact, the greatest heavyweight of all-time. Yes, superior even to Muhammad Ali, Joe Louis, and Rocky Marciano. He has conquered Michael Moorer, Buster Douglas, Riddick Bowe, Ray Mercer, Larry Holmes, George Foreman, and of course, Tyson twice. And nearly everyone knows he won his rematch with Lewis (a moral victory).

Evander is the only man in boxing history to capture the world heavyweight crown on four separate occasions, erasing Ali's name from the record books. He also has a tremendous chance of yet again re-capturing the undisputed crown in a third clash with Lewis.

NIGEL ROSSI
London, England

TSZYU: NEXT P-4-P KING?

Your feature "Who's Next? The Fighters Most Likely To Be P-4-P King" in the February 2001 issue was a top read. However, it is my opinion that you have overlooked the most likely person to be pound-for-pound king by the end of the year. Winning the first of his superfights against Sharmba Mitchell and scheduled to take on Zab Judah, Kostya Tszyu will unify the junior welterweight division. Kostya will be the first Australian (by way of Russia) to do so. The Judah fight will be a fiercely contested bout, and Kostya has the power and skill to win.

MATTHEW AMBREY
Devonport, Australia ■

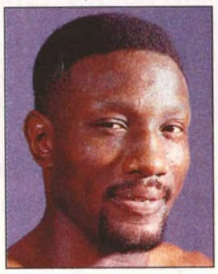
LOOKING AHEAD

By Eric Raskin

WILL WHITAKER'S RETURN BE SWEET OR SOUR?

Some risky ventures are worth taking a chance on. Just ask **Mario Lemieux**, whose return to the NHL a few months ago created a flood of both excitement and skepticism, the latter of which quickly evaporated when everyone saw how great he still was. Other undertakings turn out not to be worth the risk. Just ask **Vince McMahon**, whose XFL gets closer every week to slipping below ESPN2's women's billiards tournaments in the ratings race.

So which side does **Pernell Whitaker's** ring return fall on? Whether you love "Sweet Pea" or hate him, you probably have mixed feelings about the fact that he's fighting again. If you love him, you want to see his unique boxing wizardry a few more times, but you don't want to see him take any beatings from fighters 15 years his junior. If you hate him, maybe you do want to see him take those beatings and finally get knocked out, but you don't want to have to put up with his showboating and his arrogance until it happens.



Whitaker: Back after two-year layoff

Whitaker, who turned 37 in January and hadn't fought in 26 months going into his April 27 ring return, hears the whispers. But he insists he's fighting on for all the right reasons, and that he will retire before his detractors get the last laugh.

"I don't fight for money; I fight because I love boxing," Whitaker said. "I love what I do. And unlike what people think, I never gave it up. I didn't retire after the **Felix Trinidad** fight. I just took some time off because I was feeling kind of burned out after 15 years as a pro.

"I know what some people are saying, but nobody's ever beaten Pernell Whitaker, so nobody should be concerned about Pernell Whitaker. It's not your age, it's the way you feel. I'm only 37, and I don't even look 37. But one thing I don't want to do is lose my respect as a Hall of Famer by looking bad. I know people lose respect for you if you keep fighting too long. If I don't look good, I'll retire."

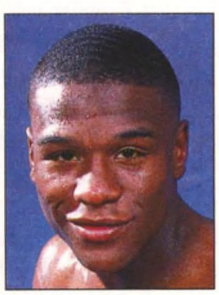
Whitaker, who is still trained by **Lou Duva** and **Tommy Brooks** and is promoted by Duva Boxing, returned to the gym in January and learned quickly how much rust can gather in two years. His timing was off, and his legs weren't quite as spry as he'd like them to be, but he insisted his speed was still there and he was feeling sharper every day. Whitaker, who believes he would have beaten Trinidad if it hadn't been for the broken jaw that he alleges was caused by "Tito's" elbow, is setting his sights on winning yet another title at 147 or 154 pounds, while tossing around names of non-champions like **Oscar De La Hoya** and **Fernando Vargas** as well.

"It don't matter who it is," Whitaker said. "I'll fight whatever fighters the fans want to see against me."

If—and it's a big if—Whitaker hasn't lost a step since his competitive showing against Trinidad, then he might still fare respectably against the elite, though it's hard to imagine him beating De La Hoya or Vargas at this point. And even if he has lost a step, he still might be better than a lesser champion like WBC super welter titlist **Francisco Castillejo**. Right around the time this magazine hits the newsstands, Whitaker will be making his return for the world to see on ESPN2. We'll find out in his first couple of fights whether, like Super Mario, his finesse and skill can still set him apart. And if not, we'll find out if he's a man of his word.

LISTEN UP

Showtime is launching a new bi-weekly boxing show in June, with most of the fights promoted by either Main Events or the British-based Sports Network. *ShowBox* will air every other Saturday and will focus primarily on up-and-coming fighters and on European boxers we rarely see in America ... WBC 130-pound champ **Floyd Mayweather's** next defense comes in his hometown of Grand Rapids, Michigan, against veteran **Carlos "Famoso" Hernandez** on May 26. The co-feature on the HBO broadcast is likely to involve Mayweather's mandatory challenger, **Jesus Chavez** ... Olympic super heavyweight gold medalist **Audley Harrison** is set to turn pro on May 19 at London's Wembley Arena ... The rematch between WBC super bantam champ **Willie Jorrin** and the man he controversially beat to win the belt, **Michael Brodie**, is set for June 1 on ESPN2 from the Arco Arena in Sacramento, California. Anyone else think Brodie needs to knock Jorrin out to win? ■



Mayweather: Will make Hernandez famous

The Only Equipment Supplier Worthy of the Name...

TITLE
BOXING
1-800-999-1213

For all your equipment.

Call 1-800-999-1213 for a free catalog or visit our website at www.titleboxing.com

PUNCHING FROM EVERY ANGLE

RINGSIDE

1-877-4-BOXING

www.ringside.com

PHOTOS COURTESY OF: TOM CASINO, TOM MORAN & DOUGLAS W